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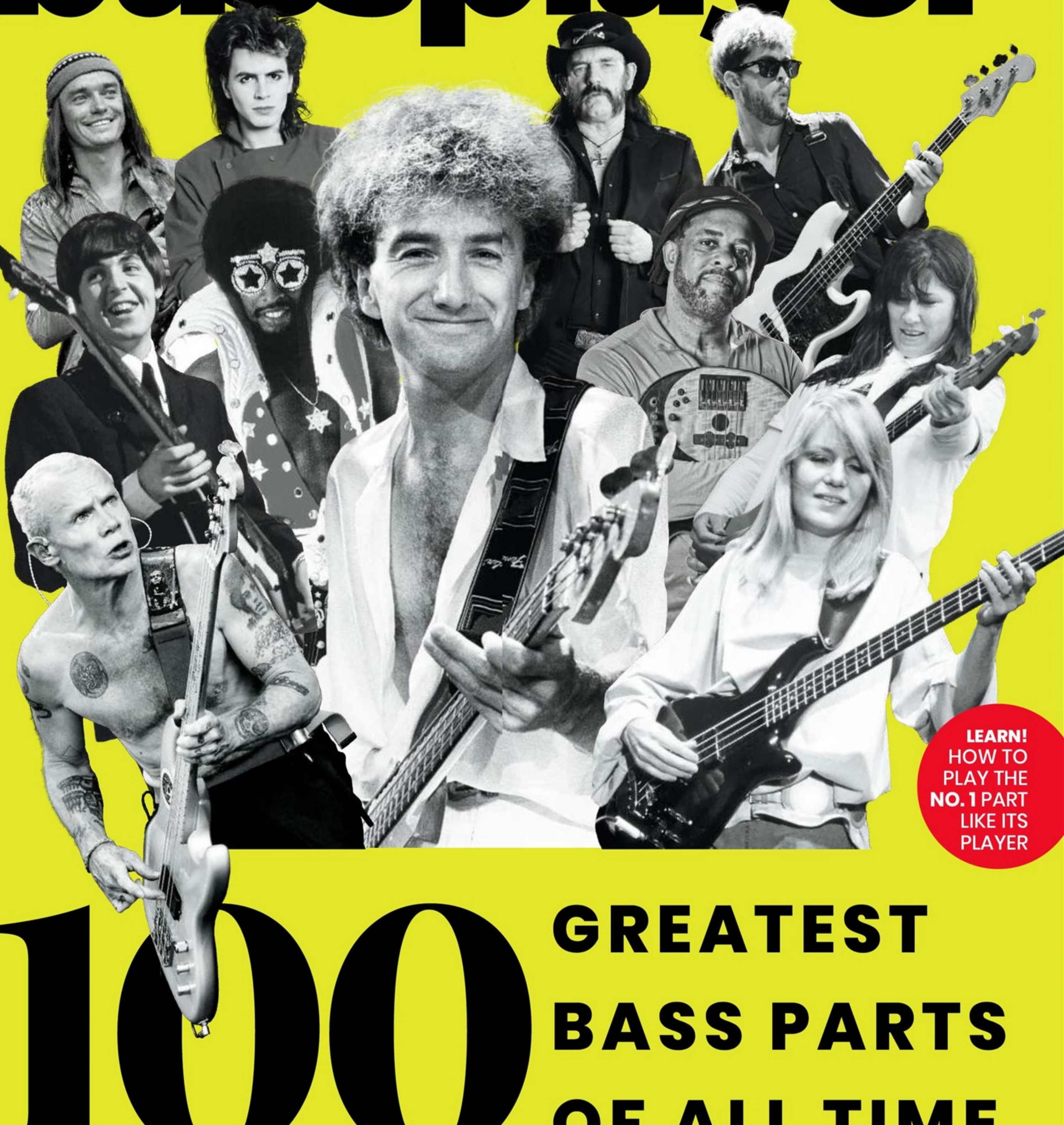

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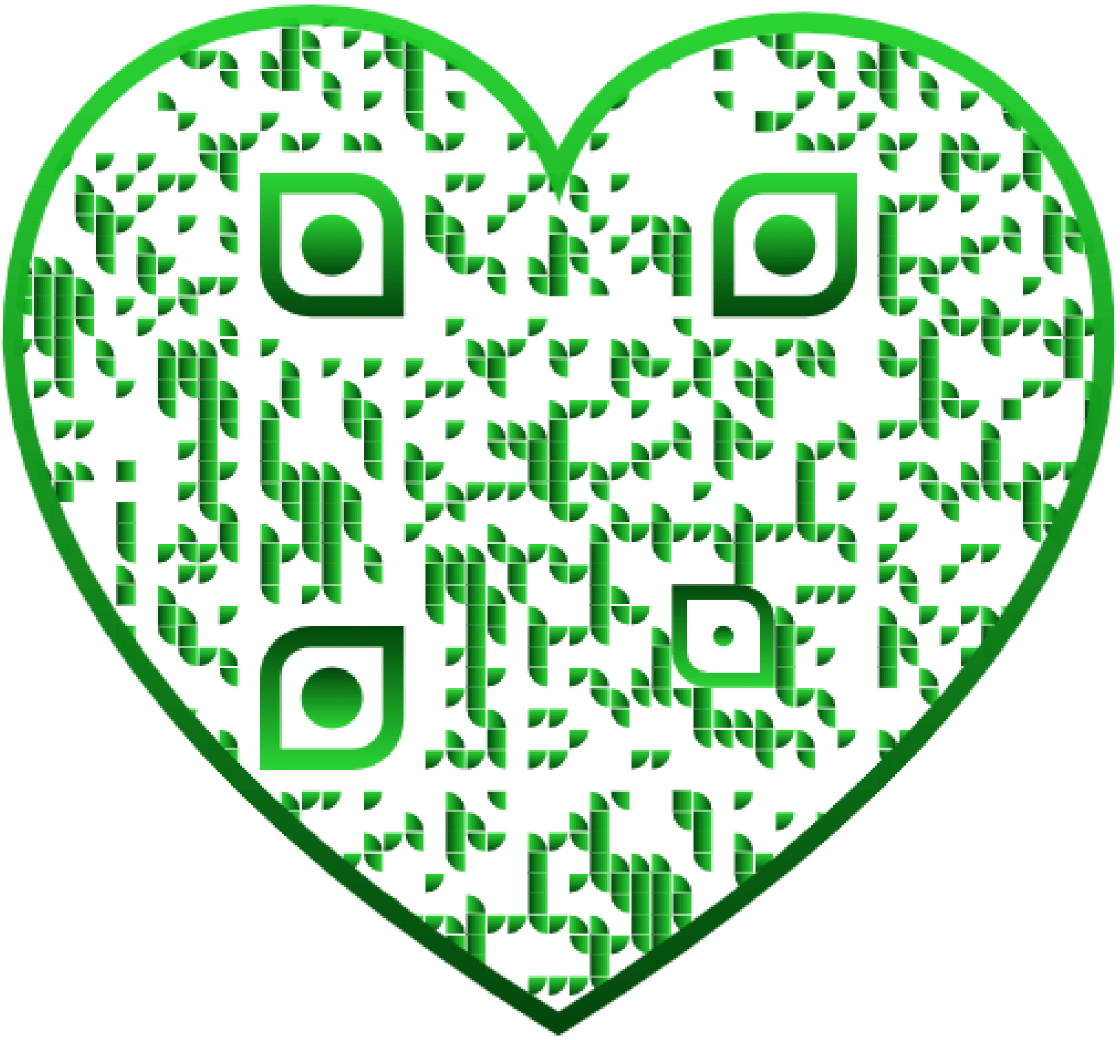

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PROMENADE MUSIC

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4 String Basses

23253 - Aria Pro II IGB50WAL 4 String Bass, Used
16343 - Cort Action 4 PJ Bass, Open Pore Walnut
23337 - Cort Action 4 String Bass, Blue Metallic
14316 - Cort Action 4 String Bass, Trans Red
19278 - Cort Action Junior Bass, Black OPB
21466 - Cort Action Junior Bass, Black Cherry
15379 - Cort B4 Plus Artisan 4-Strings Bass
23039 - Cort GB24JJ Trans Black
23038 - Cort GB24JJ Sunburst

Fender

21578 - Fender 60thRoad Worn Jazz Bass, Sunburst
21756 - Fender 60th Anniv RW J Bass, F.Silver
22007 - Fender 60thRoad Worn Jazz Bass, O.White
22370 - Fender 75th Anniv. Jazz Bass, Diamond
22368 - Fender 75th Anniv Precision Bass Diamond
19643 - Fender Am Orig. 70s Jazz, Vintage White
18485 - Fender Am. Performer P. Bass Sunburst
22352 - Fender American Pro II Jazz, Miami Blue
21789 - Fender Am Pro II Jazz Bass, Roasted Pine
22615 - Fender Am Pro II Precision Bass Sunburst
21751 - Fender Am Pro II P. Bass, Dark Night
8927 - Fender Geddy Lee Jazz Bass in Sunburst
23497 - Fender MIJ P Bass, Secondhand, 1987-88
22618 - Fender MIJ 50s Precision Bass
23086 - Fender Player Jazz Bass Fretless S.burst
23323 - Fender Player Jazz Bass Polar Black Left
23272 - Fender Player Jazz Bass Polar White
21660 - Fender Player Jazz Bass, Sunburst
19195 - Fender Player Jazz Bass, Capri Orange
22014 - Fender Player Mustang Bass PJ Aged Nat
22818 - Fender Player Plus Jazz Bass Belair Blue
23360 - Fender Player Plus Jazz Bass Oly. Pearl
22817 - Fender Player Plus P-Bass, Cosmic Jade
23322 - Fender Player P. Bass LH Sunburst
19473 - Fender Player Precision Bass, Sunburst
19314 - Fender Player Precision Bass, Black
23286 - Fender Player Precision Bass Black Lefty
21755 - Fender Player Precision Bass, Sunburst
19503 - Fender Vintera 60s Jazz Bass, Firemist
22836 - Fender Vintera 60s Jazz Bass Daphne Blue
22581 - Hagstrom Viking Bass, Tobacco Sunburst
11189 - Hofner HCT Shorty Bass, Black
23518 - Hofner HCT Shorty Violin Bass
19420 - Hofner HCT Violin Bass, Sunburst
23041 - Hofner Ignition Cavern Violin Bass Sburst
12188 - Hofner Ignition Violin Bass, Sunburst
13328 - Hofner Violin Bass Ignition Black
22533 - Hofner Ignition Club Bass, Sunburst
23448 - Hohner The Jack Bass, Headed, Nat Used
23095 - Lakland Skyline Hollowbody Sunburst Used
22148 - Levin DeLuxe LB50-TRD Bass Guitar
22112 - Levin DeLuxe LB60 Bass in High-Glo Nat
22113 - Levin DeLuxe LB76-SB Bass in High-Glo SB
22111 - Levin LB60 Bass Guitar in High-glo Black
22146 - Levin PB50-BK Bass in High-Glo Black
22147 - Levin PB50-SB Bass in High-Glo Sunburst
23162 - MarkBass MB GV4 Gloxy Val SurfGreen
23181 - MarkBass MB JF1 White Battered 4 VG RW
23574 - MusicMan Joe Dart Signature Bass, Used
23199 - Musicman Stingray Short Scale DaphneBlue
23575 - Musicman Stingray Short Scale D. Copper
23576 - Musicman Stingray Short Scale O. White
23559 - NS Design WAV4 Double Bass Amber
18114 - NS Design WAV4 Double Bass Trans Black
23584 - Orange O-Bass 2022 Version Black
23582 - Orange O-Bass 2022 Version
13012 - Rickenbacker 4003, Walnut
18077 - Rickenbacker 4003S Bass Guitar Mapleglo
18078 - Rickenbacker 4003S Bass, JetGlo
22624 - Sandberg California II VS 4-String Bass
22628 - Sandberg Electra TT4 RW Bass Guitar
22627 - Sandberg Electra VS4 RW Bass Guitar
23452 - Spector NS Pulse II 4 Ultra Violet Matte
23218 - Squier 40th Anniv Precision Bass Gold Ed
23368 - Squier 40th Anniv P Bass, Vint Ed SD Red
22897 - Squier Affinity PJ Bass Lake Placid Blue
16680 - Squier Affinity P Bass PJ Pack, Black
16151 - Squier Bronco Bass, Torino Red
18933 - Squier C. Vibe 60s Jazz Bass Fretless
21274 - Squier Classic Vibe '70s Jazz Bass, Nat
23163 - Squier Classic Vibe 50s P Bass, W Blonde
23364 - Squier CV 60s P. Bass, 3-Colour Sunburst
21604 - Squier Classic Vibe 70s P. Bass, Walnut
22863 - Squier CV 50s Precision Bass Sunburst
23232 - Squier Cont Active Jazz Bass HH Sh. Gold
23340 - Squier Contemporary Jazz Bass, DMR
22865 - Squier FSR CV Late 50s P Bass, W. Blonde
23367 - Squier Mini Precision Bass, Black
23363 - Squier Mini Precision Bass, Dakota Red
23158 - Squier Paranormal Jazz Bass 54 Sunburst
22775 - Traveler Guitars TB4P Bass
22779 - Traveler Guitars Ultra-Light Bass
14778 - Vintage ICON V74MRJP Fretless, Sunburst
23445 - Yamaha BB434M Black
23458 - Yamaha BB734A Bass, Dark Coffee Sunburst
23589 - Yamaha TRBX304 Bass, Black
23508 - Yamaha TRBX304 Bass Factory Blue Finish

Bass Cabinets

13640 - Aguilar SL112 Bass Cabinet
16800 - BLUGuitar Nanocab
13566 - Eden EGRW1264 Head & Cab Package

EICH AMPLIFICATION

16054 - Eich 110XS Bass Cabinet 4 Ohm
16055 - Eich 110XS Bass Cabinet 8 Ohm
16042 - Eich 112XS Bass Cabinet 8 Ohms
16041 - Eich 112XS Bass Cabinet 4 Ohms
16075 - Eich 115L Bass Cabinet
16052 - Eich 115XS Bass Cabinet 4 Ohm
16053 - Eich 115XS Bass Cabinet 8 Ohm
16040 - Eich 1210S Bass Cabinet
16071 - Eich 210M Bass Cabinet
16069 - Eich 212L Bass Cabinet
16070 - Eich 212M Bass Cabinet
16048 - Eich 212S Bass Cabinet 4 Ohm
16050 - Eich 212S Bass Cabinet 8 Ohm
16068 - Eich 410L Bass Cabinet
16067 - Eich 610L Bass Cabinet
16061 - Eich 612XL Bass Cab
16065 - Eich 810L Bass Cabinet
16321 - Gallien Krueger CX115 Bass Cabinet

Mark bass

5476 - Mark Bass STD104HR (4x10)
6241 - Mark Bass STD102HF (2x10)
5477 - Mark Bass STD151HR (1x15)
9033 - Markbass Traveler 121H Bass Ext Cab
9034 - Markbass Traveler 151 P Bass Guitar Cab
4733 - Mark Bass Traveller TRV102P (2x10)
16013 - Markbass 123 Alain Caron Bass Cab
16014 - Markbass CMD Combo K1 Alain Caron
17732 - Markbass Marcus Miller Cab 102
5431 - Mark Bass NY121 New York 1x 12 Bass Cab
10412 - Markbass NY122 2 x 12 Bass Cab
10409 - Markbass NY151 1 x 15 Bass Cab
10410 - Markbass NY151 RJ 1 x 15" Randy Jackson
15272 - Markbass New York 122 Ninja Bona Cab

ORANGE

6259 - Orange OBC115 (1x15)
6260 - Orange OBC410H (4x10)
5241 - Orange OBC810 (8x10)
23026 - Phil Jones Bass C4 Compact Bass Cab
20753 - Stagg 10M Speakon-Jack Lead
20754 - Stagg 10M Spk-Spk Lead (SSP10SS15)

TRACE ELLIOT

16856 - Trace Elliot 1x10 Elf Cab
19686 - Trace Elliot TE28E 2x8 bass cabinet

Bass Combos

13577 - AER Amp III Bass Amp Combo
5627 - AER Amp One (200W, 1x10)
23344 - Ampeg BA115 Combo, Secondhand
21842 - Ashdown Studio 12
22943 - Ashdown Studio 15 Bass Amp Combo
22731 - Ashdown Ashdown Studio Jnr
23314 - Boss Katana 110 Bass Amp Combo
23313 - Boss Katana 210 Bass
13566 - Eden EGRW1264 Head & Cab Package

EICH AMPLIFICATION

16046 - Eich BC112 Bass Combo
19163 - Eich BC112 PRO Bass Combo
16028 - Eich BC112 Bass Combo

Fender

13497 - Fender Rumble 100 Bass Amp Combo
4238 - Fender Rumble 15 (15W, 1x8)
12745 - Fender Rumble 200 Bass Combo
15113 - Fender Rumble 25 Bass Amp Combo
13083 - Fender Rumble 40 Bass Amp Combo
18724 - Fender Rumble LT25 Bass Combo Amp

GK GALLIEN-KRUEGER

23058 - Gallien K. BL115 Backline 115, Used
16765 - Gallien Krueger MB110 Bass Combo

Mark bass

23515 - Mark Bass CMD102P IV Bass Combo
5472 - Mark Bass CMD151P J Berlin (300W,)
5429 - Mark Bass Covers For Mark Bass Amps
6240 - Mark Bass Mini CMD121P (300W, 1x12)
18371 - Markbass Marcus Miller CMD Micro60
18372 - Markbass Marcus Miller CMD 102 250
18370 - Markbass Marcus Miller CMD 102 500
9940 - Markbass Mini CMD 151 Jeff Berlin
9939 - Markbass MiniMark 802 Bass Combo
16764 - Markbass 102 250 Richard Bona Combo
19729 - Markbass Ninja 102-500 Combo
9938 - MicroMark 801 Bass Combo

ORANGE

15715 - Orange Crush Bass 100 Bass Combo
15716 - Orange Crush Bass 25 Bass Combo
15714 - Orange Crush Bass 50 Bass Combo
23007 - Orange Crush Bass 50 Glenn Hughes
22889 - Phil Jones BG400 Suitcase Compact
23544 - Phil Jones Bass Cub Pro BG120
22786 - Phil Jones Bass Double Four BG-75

Fretless Basses

23086 - Fender Player Jazz Bass Fretless S.burst
22718 - Magic Fluke Timber Electric Bass Ash
23566 - Magic Fluke Timber Electric Bass Cherry
14867 - Magic Fluke Timber Electric Bass
18933 - Squier C. Vibe 60s Jazz Bass Fretless
14778 - Vintage ICON V74MRJP, Sunburst

Bass Heads

14618 - Aguilar Tone Hammer 500 Bass Amp Head
22741 - Ashdown ABM-300-EVO IV Head, Bass Amp
18850 - Bergantino Forte Bass Amplifier
21556 - Bergantino NXT210 Bass Cab
13566 - Eden EGRW1264 Head & Cab Package
16044 - Eich T1000 Bass Amp
16043 - Eich T300 Bass Amp
16027 - Eich T500 Bass Amp
16026 - Eich T900 Bass Amp
16319 - Gallien Krueger MB500 Fusion Bass Head

Mark bass

14828 - Mark Bass Nano Mark 300 Bass Amp Head
6243 - Mark Bass Little Mark III Bass Head 500w
9035 - Markbass Little Mark III Tube Bass Head
23164 - MarkBass Little Mark IV Bass Amp Head
23326 - MarkBass Little Mark Vintage D2 Head
23541 - Mark Bass Nano Mark II Bass Amp Head
9256 - Markbass Big Bang 500W Bass Head
19484 - Markbass Evo 1 Bass Amp Head
17254 - Markbass Little Marcus 1000 Bass Amp
17252 - Markbass Little Marcus 250 Bass Amp Head
17009 - Markbass Little Marcus 500 Bass Amp Head
17010 - Markbass Little Marcus 800 Bass Amp Head
9941 - Markbass Little Mark 250 Head Black
15271 - Markbass Little Mark Ninja Bona Head
19282 - Markbass Little Mark Vintage Bass Amp Head
9944 - Markbass MultiAmp
15151 - Markbass Randy Jackson TTE501 Head

ORANGE

6261 - Orange AD200 MK3
8231 - Orange Dark Terror Valve Guitar Head
19674 - Orange Little Bass Thing Bass Amp Head
5351 - Orange Terror Bass 500 TB500
16531 - Trace Elliot Elf 200 Watt Bass Amp Head

5 & 6 String Basses

22612 - Charvel Pro-Mod San Dimas Lambo Green
22538 - Cort A5 Beyond Open Pore Bubinga Natural
23281 - Cort Action Bass V Plus 5-String, Black
16526 - Cort GB75 5 String Bass, Black
23461 - Fender PlayerPlus Jazz Bass V 3-C Sburst
16766 - Ibanez SR30TH5PII Premium, 5-String Bass
23277 - MTD Kingston Z 5-String Trans Red Used
19381 - Marleaux MBass 5 String Bass, Burl Top
23068 - Overwater Custom 5 String Bass, Red
23335 - Overwater Perception Std Dlx, Nat, Used

Rickenbacker

21654 - Rickenbacker 4003S 5 Bass Guitar Jetglo
21655 - Rickenbacker 4003S5 String Bass Mapleglo
23564 - Rockbass Streamer LX5, Black
23090 - Sandberg California II VM 5 String, Marley Blue
19775 - Shine 5 String Bass, Trans Blue, Used

Spector

19735 - Spector Bass Rebop 5DLX Blck Cherry
11196 - Spector Bass Legend 5 Classic Blk Cherry
22523 - Spector Bass Leg 5 Cl Blk Cherry Lefty
23166 - Spector Legend 5 Neck-Thru Bass, Walnut Stain
12406 - Spector Legend Custom 5 String, Amber
23278 - Squier Precision 5-String Sunburst, Used
19158 - Sterling by MusicMan SubRay 5 Bass, HBS
6448 - Westcoast JB5, Trans Amber
8999 - Yamaha RBX5A25 String Bass, Black
4889 - Yamaha TRB1005J Bass, Natural

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For full guitar details, pricing and photos, enter the number next to each guitar model into our SKU search facility on the website.

WELCOME

What's the coolest bass part ever? We asked the question. You answered it.

Who's the greatest bass player?* What's the best bass guitar?** When was the most innovative decade to be a bass player?*** These questions and more preoccupy us all the time at *BP*, but far be it from us to tell you what we think the answers are. Instead, we asked you to vote in our recent poll of The 100 Coolest (or Hottest, if you prefer) Bass Parts Of All Time, and 30,000 of you were kind enough to let us know your thoughts.

The results are almost guaranteed to cause fireworks among *BP*'s readership, but in a sense that's beside the point, much as we enjoy the debate. This poll isn't just about awarding recognition where it's due, or about causing controversy among people who love our instrument: there is a deeper purpose than that.

What we're doing by asking you this question is committing the history of our culture for posterity. Believe me, in 2122, some historian will pick up a copy of this magazine and learn what today's perspective was on great bass, great bass players and great music.

Who knows what they'll do with that information, but one thing is for sure, the names and music of the greats of our instrument will live again because of the votes you cast and the words we wrote here. If that isn't a sufficiently noble motive for asking this question, I don't know what is.

Stay healthy, stay focused, keep playing, and I'll see you back here next month!

Joel McIver, Editor

* See *Bass Player* 418.
** The one you most regret selling.
*** The Seventies. Or now.

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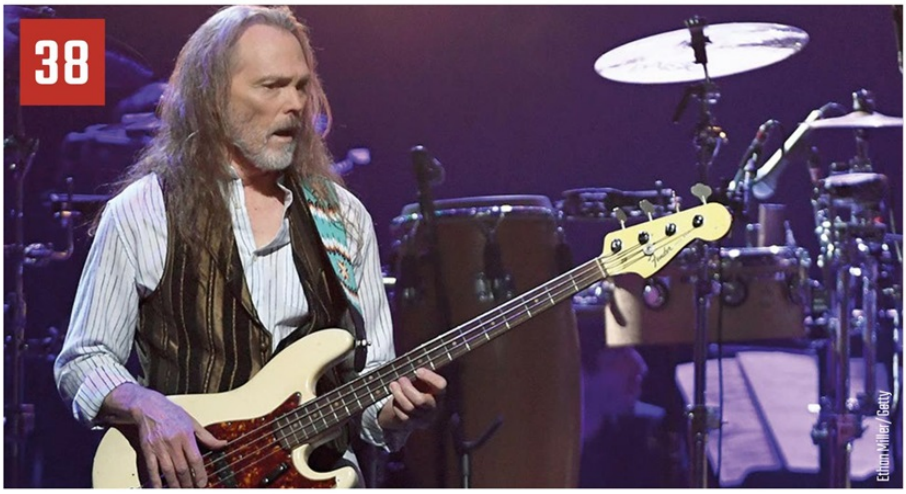

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Ethan Miller/Getty

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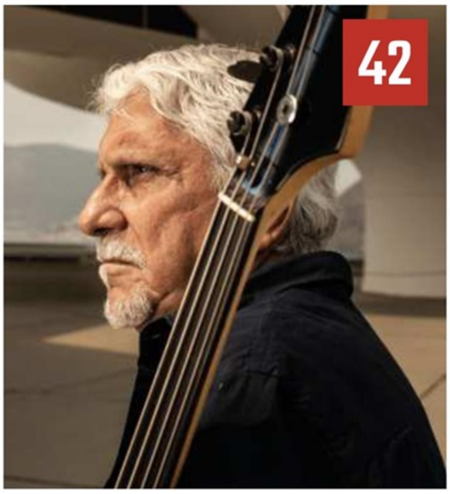

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Cover images Dart: C Brandon/Redferns. Deal: Bruno Vincent/Getty. Bootsy: Michael Ochs Archives/Getty. Pastorius: Tom Copi/Michael Ochs Archives/Getty. Weymouth: Larry Hulst/Michael Ochs Archives/Getty. Taylor: Fin Costello/Redferns. McCartney: David Redfern/Redferns. Deacon: Nigel Wright/Mirrorpix/Getty. Flea: Erika Goldring
Art Production Designer Phil Dunk
Photography Getty and Future Studio
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UK orderline and enquiries **0330 333 1113**
Overseas order line and enquiries **+44 (0)1604 251045**
Online orders **www.magazinesdirect.com**
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Printed by Buxton Press

Distributed by Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London E14 5HU, www.marketforce.co.uk. Tel: 0203 787 9001

ISSN 2634-1875

Bass Player (UK), ISSN 2634-1875, September, Issue 425 is published monthly with an extra issue in November by Future Publishing, Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA. UK. The US annual subscription price is $175.37. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named World Container Inc, c/o BBT 150-15 183rd St, Jamaica, NY 11413, USA. Application to Mail at Periodicals Postage Prices is Pending at Brooklyn NY 11256. US POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Bass Player (UK), World Container Inc, c/o BBT 150-15 183rd St, Jamaica, NY 11413, USA. Subscription records are maintained at Future Publishing, c/o Air Business Subscriptions, Rockwood House, Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 3DH, UK.

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REMEMBERING RICK TURNER

Steve Lawson's new album celebrates a fallen bass innovator

The luthier Rick Turner passed away at the age of 78 on April 17, with his legacy a permanent catalogue of innovations that have profoundly affected what we do as bass players. His work with piezo pickups and graphite necks, as well as the signature guitars he built for Lindsay Buckingham and others, made him a pioneer in the MI field,

Turner's life is now celebrated with a new album, *Rick*, from his friend and solo bassist Steve Lawson, like Turner a long-time *BP* columnist. As Lawson wrote at the time of Turner's death: "I've been trying to piece together the timeline of my friendship with Rick Turner. I'd read his column in *Bass Player* for years, but we first connected, as did so many other bass players, via The Bottom Line – the legendary email discussion list for bassists from the Nineties. Rick started posting in early 1998, answering questions and in his usual prescient way pointing out in a discussion about the gender and racial imbalance in bass magazines, that if you don't like the way someone else is doing things, do it yourself and post it online."

He added: "Over the years, Rick would come out to my shows, to house concerts or shows at the much-missed Espresso Garden with Michael Manring. He'd stop gigs in the middle to tell me how special he thought it all was, including one amazing speech about the individuality of intonation and how much he loved mine. He's the only person ever to turn round at one of my gigs and tell the people talking to shut the fuck up. That Rick was the co-inventor of graphite-necked basses with Geoff Gould, pioneered so much in bass electronics, custom design, piezo pickups, and that he made my beloved Renaissance bass was all secondary to the friendship, support and love he showed me over the years.

"A bunch of you reading this are friends here purely because Rick introduced us either at NAMM or online. He was in my corner to a degree that's incredibly rare, and my life is different because of it."

Steve, who writes *BP*'s regular Beginners lesson, was recently diagnosed with cancer: please consider purchasing his music at **https://stevelawson.bandcamp.com**.

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The lord of the loops
in full effect.

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THE Lowdown

Bass for Ukraine

Rammstein bassist raises funds.

Oliver Riedel, bassist with German metallers Rammstein, sold two of his signature Sandberg basses via the United Charity website in June. Offered as part of the Gear For Hope music auction, the instruments raised money for organisations in Ukraine. The basses featured an aged finish, an ebony fretboard, Sandberg pickups and the brand's California body shape. Sandberg explained, "[The basses] have been used in countless stage shows around the world for over 13 years. They have been hand-signed and have a unique value. A certificate prepared by Sandberg Guitars confirms the uniqueness and authenticity." As we went to press, the instruments were being auctioned for €3,100 and €2,500.

EB-Excellence

A new Reidmar is inbound.

The Swedish amp manufacturers EBS launched a new bass amp at NAMM, the Reidmar 752. A lightweight unit, the product supplies 750 watts at 2 ohms via a class-D amplifier. "The analogue preamp's powerful EQ helps dial in any sound you like with ease, and the Drive adds harmonics and dirt when needed," says EBS. "The built-in adjustable Compressor helps create a consistent and more controlled sound when desired without losing the dynamic response." Expect to pay $999.

Artist pics on this page: Getty

NEW MUSIC

Gwiz and Sklar deliver new notes

We're big fans of the experimental bassist and educator **Janek Gwizdala** here at ***BP***, so we're keen to hear his new project, One Way Out. Recorded with keyboard player Tom Cawley and drummer Nicolas Viccaro in Spain, the concept encompasses EPs and a 45-minute documentary. The fourth band-member, according to Gwizdala, is his range of effects pedals.

In other news, the latest release from The Immediate Family, featuring the great **Lee Sklar**, is titled ***Live From Telefunken Soundstage***. The music was recorded at the headquarters of the microphone company of the title in Connecticut late last year, and includes four original songs and two covers. As well as Sklar, the collective includes Waddy Wachtel, Russ Kunkel, Steve Postell, and Danny Kortchmar.

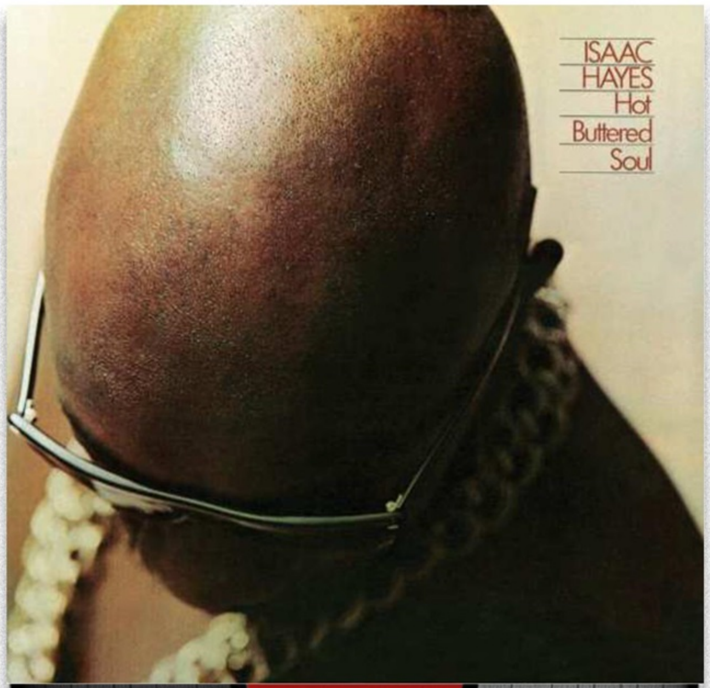
JACK OF ALL TRADES

New Jackson Concert and Spectra basses are on the way

We like a bass discussion as much as the next low-frequency enthusiast, so we welcomed the lively debate that was sparked last year when Jackson launched their new X Series Concert bass. An upgraded version, the CBXNT DX V, has just been announced, and its part-Rickenbacker, part-heavy metal visuals have caused bassists – both in favour of its looks, and the opposite – to lock horns on the subject.

The new bass comes in at around £799/$799 and features a 35" scale, a poplar body, a graphite-reinforced neck-through-body design and a 'speed maple neck contour' for nippy playing. A 12" to 16" compound radius bound laurel fingerboard and 24 jumbo frets will please the headbangers among us, while a J-style bridge pickup and P-style neck unit will bring the punch, mated to an active three-band EQ circuit. "Upgraded electronics, classic fast, brutal style and efficient playability make this entry into the line-up a fundamental force to be reckoned with," say Jackson.

A slightly more sedate new addition to Jackson's affordable range is the new X Series Spectra Bass SBX IV ($699.99, £539), with a nyatoh body, a large upper horn for better weight distribution and a graphite-reinforced through-body maple neck with scarf joint. The board and frets spec is the same as the Concert bass, and it also features two passive humbuckers, pickup coil splitting, a three-band active EQ, blend and volume controls and a push/pull selector to bypass or engage the active circuit for the three-band EQ. This function also removes the risk of a dead bass when the battery fails, a feature that we could all use.



IN THE Groove

ISAAC HAYES
HOT BUTTERED SOUL
(1969)

© Scott Dudelson/Getty

James Alexander: the soul master

Let's dig out a bass-heavy LP from the vault. This month: the classic soul album *Hot Buttered Soul* by Isaac Hayes

Record company shenanigans are often blamed for stalling the careers of talented artists; there are countless stories of woe with hotly-tipped acts slipping through the gaps in contracts, executives' whims, trends, and rank bad decisions. Soul star Isaac Hayes was almost one of these.

Known as a songwriter and producer, Hayes had been persuaded to release his own debut as a vocalist, *Presenting Isaac Hayes*, in 1968. He, Duck Dunn and Al Jackson Jr went into the studio without any material prepared, and the results were a jazzy, lumpy and unsatisfactory mess. After Stax split from Atlantic, the latter label walked off with the Memphis label's entire back catalogue. Hayes was persuaded to give it one more go – this time, having the final say on the project.

The result was one of the greatest albums of all time, period. Over 45 minutes, two sides of vinyl and a mere four songs, Hayes redefined soul for a new decade and beyond. This time, the band behind him were the Bar-Kays, a session group based at Stax and in their original iteration of the backing band for Otis Redding. The original line-up and Redding himself were tragically killed in a plane crash in 1967; the only members to survive were Ben Cauley (trumpet) and James Alexander, the bass player who had been on a different aeroplane on that day.

By the time of the *Hot Buttered Soul* recordings, Alexander and Hayes were joined by Michael Toles on guitar and drummer Willie Hall, with co-producer Marvell Thomas sharing keys duties with the frontman and a guest solo from Harold Beane on the bluesy, psychedelic Burt Bacharach track, 'Walk On By'. On that iconic cover version, Alexander's restrained, smooth, fat sound showcases the Precision bass in all its glory. As the energy of the track amps up, and the arrangement gets busy with it, the bassist's arpeggios and runs up and down the higher register make for a breathless, dramatic denouement. It is 12 glorious, passionate minutes of magnificence.

Hayes' cover of Bacharach's *Walk On By* is 12 glorious, passionate minutes of magnificence

'Hyperbolicsyllabicsequedalymystic' is a mighty nine minutes of wah-wah guitar and bass doubling the funky riff. It's Hayes' first writing contribution (with Al Bell), and a clear influence on the likes of Prince. 'One Woman' follows, the purest, sweetest soul of the lot.

Coming in at just under 19 minutes is 'By The Time I Get To Phoenix', a plaintive, Jimmy Webb-penned love song. The pulse of the bass in the first nine minutes underneath Hayes' close-mic spoken word introduction is an object lesson in how a bass can both anchor a song and fill the low frequency spectrum. Alexander's line and Ike's vocals intertwine for a beautiful end to an incredible LP. It made Hayes a star in his own right.

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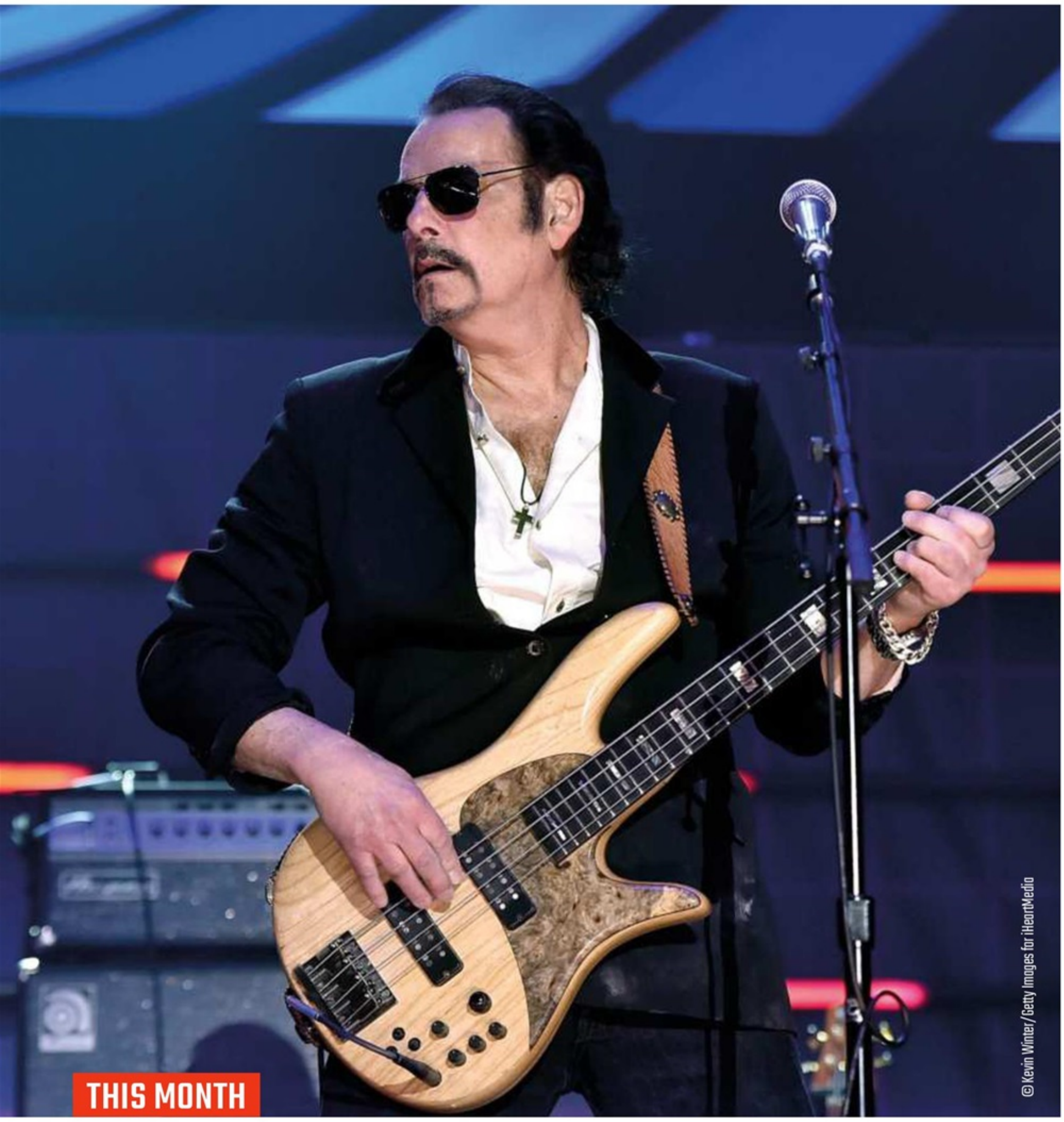

© Kevin Winter/Getty Images for iHeartMedia

THIS MONTH

Prescott Niles

The Knack's bassist has a reputation that goes far beyond *that* hit: Mr Niles digs into five key albums from his career.

The Knack's huge 1979 hit 'My Sharona' is instantly recognisable for its bouncing, new wave bass-line. That iconic part was played by Prescott Niles, a musician keen to explore the different timbres of various bass guitars. As well as being in the quintessential new wave act, Niles has worked with many alternative, pop and classic rock bands. In fact, the New Yorker was hand-picked by none other than George Harrison to appear on the *Shanghai Surprise* movie soundtrack in 1986.

"At the time I lived in England," says Niles. "The first thing George said to me was, 'I heard 'My Sharona'' so I felt I was respected and that I could play. Then I had the added pressure of playing with Jim Keltner on drums! A genius. I was reading from a chord chart. George had all these diminished ninths and all that stuff, and I was sweating. George was next to me. I passed the test because they didn't stop the tape!"

The seal of approval from the humble megastar Harrison was a huge boost for Niles, whose three kids are also all musicians. *Bass Player* recently spent a very enjoyable hour or so chatting with the Knack man, who enlightened us on everything from Hendrix to palm muting on five albums significant to his career.

VELVERT TURNER GROUP

Velvert Turner Group (1972)

"I learned a lot about improvising."

"I'm from Brooklyn; Velvert auditioned as a singer for a blues group I was playing in there, which was the first time I met him. I told him that he kind of looked a little similar to Jimi Hendrix, maybe a taller version. Velvert said, 'Oh, I know him'. Sure you do! A year later I was with him at Jimi Hendrix's 25th birthday party! I got into a lot of shows as a result of knowing Velvert, including a place in Upper Manhattan where everybody jammed together; I learned a lot about improvising and not necessarily just playing what's on the record. We were offered a record deal by Michael Lang, who had promoted Woodstock: that was amazing to me, as I'd been at the festival. So off we went to Los Angeles and started recording. I'm using a P-Bass on 90 percent of this album. I got it at a pawn shop. It was $95.99 and so I had to borrow money from my mom, although she wasn't aware of it at the time. It was beat up, and the paint was taken off, but you know, it's become my holy grail. Everybody I've worked with loves the sound of it. It has great resonance, and I've never changed the pickups or had a fret job. It is just fantastic."

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THE KNACK

Get The Knack (1979)

"I like chords. Fifths sound great on bass."

"By this point I'd added a Gibson Thunderbird with a single pickup and a Rickenbacker to my collection, then I subbed for a bassist to a gig in LA. The club owner said, 'Hey man, you're a good bass player, I got this bass here – and if you want it, it's $100'. It was a Guild M85, and that's what I used on 'My Sharona'. There's a Hofner on 'That's What The Little Girls Do', and for 'Oh Tara' that's the Rickenbacker. I was one of the first bass players to take off the pickup covers, like Les Paul guitarists sometimes do, and that was because the Guild didn't have a lot of high end. I thought it'd give me more presence, and I don't know if that's true or not, but it looked cool. I was using Dean Markley halfround strings – half roto and half regular – as Rotosounds are a little too bright sometimes. The Rickenbacker was mellower as it had flats, and didn't have the punch of the Guild or the bottom end of the P-Bass. I'd also started using a Marshall head and a 4x12 cabinet. The Knack songs are real fast, so I was playing a lot of eighth notes. I liked switching between using a pick and using my fingers – I realised that I had to palm-mute lightly, not to deaden it too much. I also like chords: using fifths sounds great on bass."

THE KNACK

Round Trip (1981)

"This is my best bass sound ever."

"This album was produced by Jack Douglas of Cheap Trick. Mike Chapman had produced our first two albums, but he wasn't on his game: I think he was going through some personal issues. Capitol also didn't want us to release a new album, for some reason. The band actually split up after the second album [*...But The Little Girls Understand*]. Then John Lennon was assassinated and I called Doug Fiegler [lead guitar, vocals] and said, 'Whatever our problems are, can we do something?' So we got in the studio with Jack, who is very meticulous about the sound. *Round Trip* has very diverse musical styles: for example, 'Africa' was a funk song. On the first track, 'Radiating Love', you can really hear the Precision when I slide up to the higher notes. That's the amazing thing about that P-Bass – it can also have a growl to it. I also used the Thunderbird on 'Boys Go Crazy', and a Vox Teardrop bass which I used on some overdubs. I'm playing a very McCartney bass-line on 'Sweet Dreams'. To this day I marvel at some of his lines – I go, 'Wow, what a brilliant idea'. The album is full of diversity, and that came from our collective abilities. I have to say that Jack also got my best bass sound ever."

JOSIE COTTON

From The Hip (1984)

"The bass has a hell of a punch to it."

"I heard Josie playing in LA. She was cool, I liked her music, and I was lucky enough to get involved. We did a lot of TV, which we hadn't done with The Knack – one of our cardinal sins. I was playing with a great drummer, Dony Wynn, who had worked with Robert Palmer. I realised how great he was – playing mainly eighth notes between the kick and snare. I loved Robert Palmer: he was a great and under-appreciated singer. I'd bought a G&L double-pickup bass and I used that on a few songs, including 'Life After Love' which has those Macca-like walking lines. The bass-line is featured throughout the whole song, which is a Sixties rock-style ballad. Working with Dony, there was a real pocket to it. The keyboards were more prominent, and I played a lot of eighth notes, which is my forte. I pretty much followed the guitar lines, but on 'Life After Love' I mostly did my own thing – and to my great joy, that became the main hook of the song. It sounds really great on an antiquated jukebox: that Fifties sound is what you want. The bass has a hell of a punch to it, but also real warmth on the low end. I can switch between fingers and pick in one bar, and I can really hear the difference."

THE KNACK

Zoom (1998)

"Playing bass is a joy and a pleasure."

"I'm used a few different basses on this album. I had a Warwick, which I used on 'Mister Magazine', a song that had another McCartney kind of line. The opening's got this high hook, a suspended fourth or sixth, going back to the low E. I was given some basses by VJ, who were just coming into prominence. Terry Bozzio was our drummer by then, and I can tell you that once you play with Frank Zappa, you can play anything. It was great recording with him; we worked really fast. I'd met Philip Kubicki, and he gave me this prototype bass which I used. A lot of people haven't even heard of him, but his basses are fantastic. A funny story: I was playing my Kubicki in a bar once and someone came up to me and said, 'Dude, what happened to that bass? It's all messed up'. I said, 'I left it in the sun and the damn fretboard has gone weird'. He went, 'How do you play in tune?' I said, 'I don't know – I gotta figure it out'. Ha ha! If I want to play lower registers, that bass is incredible and sounds completely different to any of my other ones. I use it still. I have plenty of options for bass these days. I've even got an eight-string Rickenbacker now. I love playing bass – it's a joy and a pleasure."

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I WAS THERE!

A historic moment in bass world – recalled by those who were there to see it

When Suzi Quatro donned a catsuit for *Happy Days* and became the most visible bassist of her generation...

Suzi Quatro, born in Detroit in 1950, was scooped up aged 20 from her hometown club circuit by the pop producer Mickie Most on a night off from recording Jeff Beck at Motown. Moving to the UK, she launched an enduring career with a single, 'Can The Can'. Assisted by the songwriting team of Mike Chapman and Nicky Chinn, who had composed songs for The Sweet and other glam-rockers of the day, Quatro scored 10 hit singles before the Seventies were out and became a major star in her adopted country.

However, it wasn't until her 1977–78 stint as Leather Tuscadero in the Fifties TV spoof *Happy Days* that Quatro finally gained a significant American audience. Her character, the younger sister of Pinky Tuscadero, was a former juvenile delinquent who ran a girl group called Leather & The Suedes. Asked about the role, she told us: "They'd had the part in mind for a long time, but couldn't cast it: they needed somebody who could act and sing, and was vulnerable but tough: all the different elements together. Then the casting director went into her daughter's bedroom, and my picture on the cover of *Rolling Stone* was on the wall. And she said, 'Who is that? That's who we're looking for'."

"Doing the show was fantastic – absolutely great," she continued. "I did 15 episodes and figured that was enough, because I didn't want to be forever typecast as Leather Tuscadero. It was a wonderful role: I was the female Fonz. I got told by the secretary years later – and of course Paramount didn't tell me this at the time, because I would have raised my price – that aside from Henry Winkler I got the most fan mail. Isn't that wonderful?"

Quatro still looks back fondly on the Seventies, she told us. "That decade was one of the last great eras for individual bands. It was the last era when you knew everybody's name in the band. It was an interesting time for music because every band had a different image. Bands had more identity. Musicians knew that you had to go out and do eight million shows. It showed in the music. That's why it's still a popular era. It wasn't created in the studio, it was created by the musicians.

"I liked the days when you used to stand in the studio and the drummer would look at you and give you a little figure on the snare, and you would answer on the bass. This is how you get magic. That's why those scratchy old Elvis records still sound good. Listen to 'Can The Can'. I screamed. I sang. You hear it. It's exciting – you can't create that in a studio!"

Suzi Q in character as Leather Tuscadero. Note future movie director Ron Howard on saxophone.

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"Hey Fonzie, what key is this song in?"
"Ayyyyyyyyy!"

© ABC Photo Archives/Disney General Entertainment Content via Getty

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Low Life

GOING TO 11

Is your amp big enough?

Maximise your live bass performance with Tax The Heat bassist and BIMM tutor Antonio Angotti.

BIMM INSTITUTE

Have you ever looked longingly at your current bass amplifier and wondered whether it would cut it at a live show? Perhaps you only have a small practice unit, or maybe you only have room at home or in your car for a smaller amp. At the same time, you might be assuming that gigs at larger venues require your modestly-sized bass rig to be upgraded to an 8x10 in order to cut through. Is that actually true?

The truth is that having an amplifier for a live show isn't completely necessary. There are plenty of bassists out there gigging without amplifiers on stage, DI-ing themselves straight into the PA or via a pedalboard/preamp in tandem with an in-ear monitoring system. This solution doesn't really affect the front-of-house sound in larger venues, but it will certainly affect your experience – most notably because of the absence of air being moved behind you, or the lack of a rumble from the amp. There are workarounds to compensate for this in the form of vibration packs like the BackBeat or vibrating platforms by Porter & Davies, but you'll need to get comfortable with this over time. It's also worth noting that an ampless stage will look empty, so stage dressing or stage sets will be necessary to make up for this.

So, what about bassists who don't have the aforementioned kit, or don't want an ampless stage? Well, consider the size of the venues you most commonly play. I once witnessed a support band turn up for a small bar gig with an 8x10 bass stack, which was complete overkill for the size of the venue. If that's the size of venue you're playing, then a 2x10 or 1x15 bass rig will be sufficient with the usual PA support. I would also suggest a bass head of at least 500 watts solid state or 100 watts tube/valve to give ample headroom for any scenario, without being overbearing.

As you start to work in larger venues or play open-air festivals, you may want to consider a larger bass rig. The main thing to remember is that your amp is never solely responsible for projecting yourself, as you will also be coming through the PA, so a 4x10 is likely to be adequate as it gives you a good chance of hearing yourself at source. If you're still in doubt, a modular rig will provide the most versatility for a variety of different-sized shows. Use two 4x10s for large shows, but strip down to a single 4x10 for mid-sized gigs, while a couple of 2x10s will enable you to condense your rig for a café gig or rehearsal and then add to it when the gig calls for it. Just make sure that when you're combining cabinets, you achieve an even ohmage, and that the collective ohm load is supported by your bass head.

The Woodshed

NO RETURN

Support your local retailer, says bass-builder Rob

Ace luthier Rob Elrick brings decades of wisdom to the table. Listen up as he delivers the verdict!

Now you've done it! You went and bought another bass. We've always liked that about you... but as the endorphins wear off and thoughts of your next credit-card bill begin to loom large, buyer's remorse sets in and you start wondering about the seller's return policy.

In this era of online point-and-click shopping, more and more consumer spending consists of impulse purchases. For many, the allure of free shipping can be hard to resist. Many online retail offers of consequence-free returns has made 'buy it and try it' the new standard procedure for far too much of what we consume.

Competition from online giants has compromised brick and mortar retail in virtually every market segment, making 'try before you buy' opportunities harder than ever to find. In recent years the number of specialty music product retailers, such as boutique bass dealers, which once serviced niche market segments, has dwindled. Those that remain are forced to duke it out with a handful of giant online music retailers, and the behemoth Amazon.

Specialty retailers provide expertise that used to be rewarded with profits from sales. Today those profits are chipped away by accommodations demanded in order to survive in a David and Goliath competition that slashes at the bottom line of every sale. The most conspicuous and costly accommodation is often 'free' shipping.

For the record, shipping is not, and never has been, free. Trust me on this. FedEx, UPS, DHL – none have ever waived a fee for us, and I'll wager they've never done it for you. Shipping always costs money, but the trick of it is, the more you ship, the less it costs. This reality adds to the price that niche retailers with narrow sales channels pay to survive in a market dominated by online giants.

The retail landscape of the 21st century has become a 'use it or lose it' marketplace. If we don't support the brick and mortar retailers who have struggled to remain viable amid growing virtual competition, it won't be long before they're all gone. If you value the expertise offered by specialty retailers, I strongly encourage you to support them with your business, rather than turning to online alternatives just to save a few dollars. The experience and expertise they contribute to the market will be lost without our support – and sometimes that means that we have to pay for shipping.

The retail landscape of the 21st century has become a 'use it or lose it' marketplace

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Theory of the Month

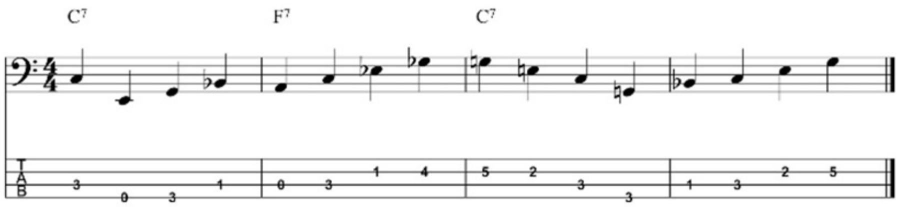
TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON

aguilar

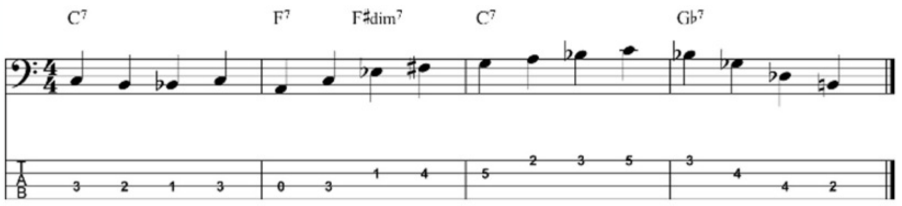
BLUES SUBSTITUTIONS AND REHARMONISATION

Nik Preston takes us through three ways to exploit this useful theory

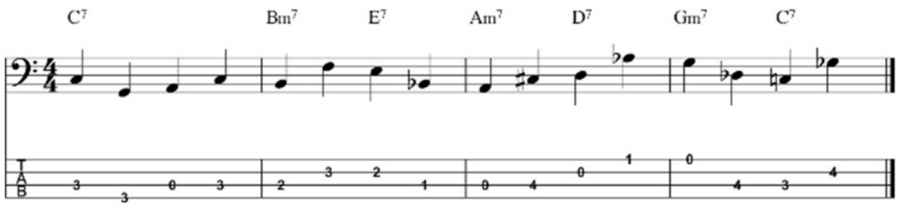
EXERCISE ONE



EXERCISE TWO



EXERCISE THREE



We all know how common various types of blues progressions are and, due to the familiarity we have with the I, IV, V progression, a blues can be a great context for introducing new harmonic concepts and techniques.

It's probably worth saying that a blues progression can exist in many styles outside of 'the blues' and each one of these may have its own harmonic conventions. The theory behind why these work can be a very useful tool to help us apply similar concepts in a range of settings, so this month we're taking a look at some very common blues substitutions and a reharmonisation.

What do these terms mean? Well, when we replace a chord with another that has the same function – a desire to resolve or to harmonise – we're generally looking at a type of substitution. However, although both fall under the same umbrella heading of reharmonisation, when we're replacing a passage – or multiple bars – of chords with other chords, we tend to refer to the technique of reharmonisation as opposed to substitution.

Both techniques have a similar purpose, which is to change the root movement and often the chord qualities of chords which are harmonising or supporting a given melody. Ultimately, they will resolve to a tonal centre in the progression which is unchanged from the original.

We've looked at tritone substitution in previous columns, but as a quick refresher, this occurs when we replace a dominant chord with one built on a root note a tritone away. For example, C7 can be replaced with G♭7 when it is resolving up a fourth or down a fifth. Diatonic chord family substitution occurs when we replace a chord with another within the same chord family – in other words from the Tonic, Sub-dominant or Dominant chord families.

We will encounter substitutions in Exercise 2 quite frequently, and the reharmonisation in Exercise 3 less so, especially outside a jazz context. As concepts, both are hugely valuable to us, and these examples serve to show some of the options in frequent use.

As we discussed in our last column, we bassists have the opportunity to alter the root movement of a progression once we have the sound and the theoretical options to an advanced level of familiarity which enables us to utilise them musically. As usual, take it slowly and leave the practice room with more options than you entered it with.

EXERCISE 1

This is a very simple version of the first four bars of a dominant blues progression. The walking line is derived predominantly from chord tones, so this is fairly elementary from a harmonic perspective, but should serve as a basic recap to anyone not familiar with walking technique.

EXERCISE 2

This exercise includes a substitution in bar two which utilises a diminished chord built on the ♭V degree, on beats 3 and 4, which is commonly seen. We then use a tritone substitution in which C7 is replaced with a G♭7 in bar four. This would resolve to an F7 in a standard blues progression.

Dominant chords and diminished chords both contain tritones, and as such have an instability which tends to create tension and a desire to resolve.

EXERCISE 3

This is a reharmonisation akin to Charlie Parker's famous 'Blues For Alice' progression. It changes root movement quite radically from the conventional first four bars, but still resolves to chord IV in bar five. You'll see that it travels there via a series of II, V, I progressions which resolve down in tones.

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THE 100 GREATEST BASS PARTS OF ALL TIME

We asked. You voted. Let's reveal the greatest lines, fills and solos ever recorded on the coolest instrument ever invented.
Did the bass community get it right?

A few months back, we at *BP* were enjoying our usual post-deadline cocktail when we got into the argument that all bass players get into from time to time – what's the hottest, coolest, grooviest, sweetest or just best bass part of all time? After hours of heated debate, we decided to get you to make that decision for us via an online poll at our site Guitarworld.com. In due course, 30,000 of you helped us out by picking the winner from a list of 100 songs, plus an Other category for bass parts of your choice. Your final list is printed in full here, with some useful advice about how to play those immortal parts yourself.

We restricted the choices to one song per bassist – otherwise the poll would only contain entries by James Jamerson, Carol Kaye, Lee Sklar, Chuck Rainey, Paul McCartney and Geddy Lee – except in a few cases where a bassist performed both with a band or solo or on a session, or when two artists linked up to form a one-off project (see our No. 3 entry). We stuck to real bass, whether upright or electric, so there are no bass parts played on a pitchshifted guitar ('Seven Nation Army' by the White Stripes, we're looking at you).

Oh, and we've printed the results in reverse order, just to add a little tension to your lives. I recommend that you don't jump forward to see what No. 1 is, although I realise that might be just too tempting. Why not accompany the read with a listen on the Spotify playlist we've created at **tinyurl.com/5cu2t2bz**?

Let me know what you think of the winning choice when you get there: my email address is at the front of the mag. After all, this is a debate that will never end. With so much great bass playing being recorded every single day around the world, how could it?
Joel McIver, Editor

THE NUMBERS!

Your **30,000** votes in data...

Years covered by votes
1956–2016

Your most popular years
1993 (7 entries)
1969 and **1977** (6 entries each)

Decades by popularity
1970s (34 entries) 1980s (29 entries)
1990s (18 entries) 1960s (10 entries)
2010s (4 entries) 1950s (3 entries)
2000s (2 entries)

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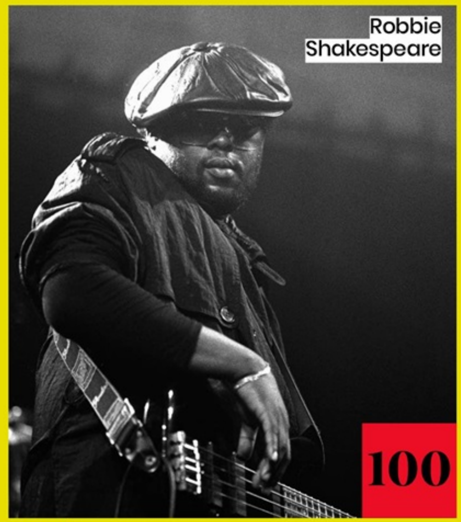
Marcus Miller



Robbie Shakespeare

Ron Carter

100
DOWNPRESSOR MAN
Peter Tosh, 1977
Bassist Robbie Shakespeare

The sadly late Robbie rocked the world of reggae and beyond: check out this elegant line for a reminder that reggae bass can be subtle as well as thunderous – and who would have thought of playing this part on a Hofner violin bass?

99
FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS
Metallica, 1984
Bassist Cliff Burton

The great Cliff also appears much higher on this list: in defiance of our 'one song per bassist' rule, the Metallica fans among you voted this song in via the poll's Other category. Check out his famous overdriven solo in the intro.

98
BIG MAN ON MULBERRY STREET
Billy Joel, 1986
Bassist Ron Carter

This song helped to sustain the Piano Man's career in the mulleted mid-Eighties, even lending its title to an episode of *Moonlighting*. The great Ron Carter supplied upright bass, but we suspect that a lot of otherwise very Carter-loyal people aren't aware of that fact – which we think explains its unusually lowly position on this list.

97
JUST MY IMAGINATION (RUNNING AWAY WITH ME)
Temptations, 1971
Bassist Carol Kaye

In a career packed full of world-class bass performances, the great Carol Kaye delivered many a line as slick as this one – but rarely one as emotional. Listen how she perfectly gauges the rests and passing notes to suit the sentiments of the song.

PLAYING TIP

Ms Kaye used a Fender Precision on this song for a warm tone. Roll off your mids and top end, but pick with commitment so that the notes have a little edge. Her tone has become a staple of bass culture for a reason.

96
THE GHETTO
Donny Hathaway, 1969
Bassist Marshall Hawkins

Across almost seven minutes of this heartfelt ballad, Marshall Hawkins anchors the music with a sleek but thoughtful line, full of questioning fills... and his tone is to die for, too.

95
THE REAL ME
The Who, 1973
Bassist John Entwistle

Not so much a song as an opportunity for John Entwistle to play high-register fills, this showcase for the late Ox also features his own brand of walking line at various points throughout. We'd all love to play like this if our bands would let us.

94
BETTER GIT IT IN YOUR SOUL
Charles Mingus, 1959
Bassist Charles Mingus

Leading off the immortal *Mingus Ah Um* LP, this composition is raucous but emotional, busy but focused, with the supposed Angry Man Of Jazz on audibly playful form.

93
COME DOWN
Anderson .Paak, 2016
Bassist Brian Cockerham

You heard this song all through 2016 whether you know it or not, and that bass-line – tickling your brain with its repeated three-note tail – is its finest feature.

92
EXPRESS YOURSELF
Charles Wright And The Watts 103rd Street Rhythm Band, 1973
Bassist Melvin Dunlap

Melvin Dunlap probably never thought that two decades after he laid down the unforgettably hooky bass-line for the original 'Express Yourself', the line would become the mainstay of a gangsta rap anthem. On the original version Dunlap's bass part was echoed by a guitar, but when the rappers NWA sampled the bass-line and made it the centre of a new song, also called 'Express Yourself', they dropped the guitar part and amped up the bass-line, a joyous Jackson 5-style mid-ranger.

91
SCOOP
Marcus Miller, 1993
Bassist Marcus Miller

Sure, the percussion and synths of this song may sound a little dated now, but for a slap-bass workout, you need look no further. Sub-bass also abounds in this monster showcase for Miller.

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Graham Maby (far left)

Thundercat

90 GOT THE TIME
Joe Jackson, 1979
Bassist Graham Maby

Neither new wave nor power-pop but possessing elements of both, Joe Jackson's music was never slicker than this song – and the bass intro makes it irresistible. Anthrax recorded a beefed-up cover in 1990, with that bass tone given tons of clank by Frank Bello.

89 TWO FOOLS A MINUTE
David Lee Roth, 1988
Bassist Billy Sheehan

Ex-Van Halen singer Roth released his understated second solo album, *Skyscraper*, to a muted response, but dig deep and you'll find some of the very best of Billy Sheehan's playing. Towards the end of this song, he delivers a truly mesmerising solo that goes all the way to the upper register and beyond. We're sure he's fretting on the neck pickup at one point.

88 ROCK STEADY
Aretha Franklin, 1971
Bassist Chuck Rainey

Sometimes, bass doesn't merely anchor a song: it is the song, as in this sultry slice of funked-up soul from the queen of the genre. Chuck Rainey is a master of fine judgment here, delivering a slick foundation as well as high-register fills.

87 I AM THE RESURRECTION
Stone Roses, 1989
Bassist Gary 'Mani' Mounfield

The 'Madchester' phenomenon of 1989-1992 may not have been noticed much outside the UK, but bass players worldwide definitely rate this slinky solo at the end of the coolest song by the movement's coolest band.

86 LOVELY DAY
Bill Withers, 1977
Bassist Jerry Knight

You've probably never thought of 'Lovely Day' as being driven by a bass-line, as it's better known for its mellow vocal hooks, specifically the 18-second "lovely daaaaaaaaaaay" chorus which closes it. Well, think again: the song comes complete with a sweet, descending line that adds a funky fill each time it goes down a step and then includes a dexterous turnaround on the way back up. Writer and producer Jerry Knight played the line, one of the most instantly recognisable of the whole R&B catalogue, and certainly the best-known of any Withers song.

85 HAIR
Graham Central Station, 1974
Bassist Larry Graham

Five minutes of a huge, badass bass-line from the man who invented the slapping style anchor his band's debut album, and what hot minutes they are. Preaching a message of open-mindedness while his bass thumps and preens along underneath, Larry Graham brings his blend of funk and R&B to the table in no uncertain fashion – and if you can play along with him, you've arrived as a bassist.

84 BUENA
Morphine, 1993
Bassist Mark Sandman

The late Mark Sandman's legacy is intact among bass players thanks to songs such as this one. A sliding chordal line that holds down a dark blues, the part is so catchy as to be unforgettable.

83 I'LL TAKE YOU THERE
The Staple Singers, 1972
Bassist David Hood

Muscle Shoals bassist David Hood plays an effortlessly melodic line on this gospel-influenced soul song, which readers will also recognise because it was sampled for Salt-N-Pepa's cheerful 1991 hit 'Let's Talk About Sex'.

82 THEM CHANGES
Thundercat, 2015
Bassist Thundercat

TikTok users resurrected this funky little song recently, giving it renewed life seven years after its original release. Figure out Stephen 'Thundercat' Bruner's sweet chords and you won't be able to stop playing them.

PLAYING TIP

Get your effects straight here. Thundercat uses a Moogerfooger Low-Pass filter on this song, but try a synth and wah combination of your choice.

81 GREEN EARRINGS
Steely Dan, 1976
Bassist Chuck Rainey

On Steely Dan's luxurious fifth album, Chuck Rainey delivered a masterclass in grooves, not least on this underrated song. Fleet-fingered and full of ghost notes, his line supports the song and pushes it forward.

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80 WHEREVER I LAY MY HAT (THAT'S MY HOME)

Paul Young, 1983
Bassist Pino Palladino

Marvin Gaye's 1963 original was a wonderful song in its own right, but when Paul Young enlisted the great Pino Palladino to play on a cover version two decades later, bass history was made. That fretless intro, and subsequent line, isn't just cool: it redefined the instrument for the Eighties and beyond.

79 BERNADETTE

Four Tops, 1967
Bassist James Jamerson

This snaky line could only have been played by the late James Jamerson. Busy but not too busy, the part inhabits the higher midrange and is mixed high enough for us to marvel at his taste and imagination. It's the sheer feel of the bass playing that blows our minds.

78 THE SINISTER MINISTER

Béla Fleck & The Flecktones, 1990
Bassist Victor Wooten

Go Vic! The tone, the energy and the sheer enthusiasm of the young Wooten, perhaps the greatest bassist of his generation, shine through in this still-unusual song.

77 FOR THE LOVE OF MONEY

O'Jays, 1973
Bassist Anthony Jackson

Phase and reverb on a bass would sound pretty progressive in 2022 – but in 1973, Anthony Jackson's instantly-recognisable opening riff must have sounded completely alien. You'll also know it from a bunch of samples, including a song by Dr. Dre.

76 MAGGIE MAY

Rod Stewart, 1971
Bassist Ron Wood

Give a decent guitar player a bass, and there will be two outcomes. Either they will play incompetently, or they'll overplay brilliantly, making you a bit envious of their perspective on our instrument from the outside. Ron Wood, now in the Rolling Stones – like you didn't know that already – shows off fabulously on this song, essentially filling the line up with entertaining upper-register fills.

75 STRATUS

Billy Cobham, 1973
Bassist Lee Sklar

If there's a rock song from the Seventies that you like, Lee Sklar either plays bass on it or would have done if he hadn't been busy that day. Try playing this twisty bass part for a minute: you'll be fine. Try playing it for the entire length of the song, the big hit from Billy Cobham's album *Spectrum*, and you will mess up at some point. Accept it… we did.

74 DEBASER

Pixies, 1989
Bassist Kim Deal

This expertly chaotic song always sounds as if it's about to fall apart, moving from Kim Deal's subtle bass intro through the rants of singer Black Francis, the poppy guitar line and the sweet backing vocals. Disobedient pop at its best.

73 HIT ME WITH YOUR RHYTHM STICK

Ian Dury & The Blockheads, 1978
Bassist Norman Watt-Roy

The highly funky Blockheads had something indefinable which made them unique. Which other band would write a trilingual song about non-violence and title it this bizarrely? And which bassist could play so many notes per bar without sounding over the top? Norman Watt-Roy laid down a supremely busy line to accompany the late Ian Dury's laconic vocals, but his bass-line doesn't sound inappropriate: in fact, it sounds amazing.

PLAYING TIP

Make sure your fingers are warmed up for this fast plucking workout. Practise this line at half-speed first.

72 STIR IT UP

Bob Marley & The Wailers, 1967
Bassist Aston 'Family Man' Barrett

There's so much power in each note of Aston Barrett's bass part here that he doesn't actually need to play much: what he does play speaks with the utmost authority, without requiring thunderous tones.

71 IF THAT'S YOUR BOYFRIEND (HE WASN'T LAST NIGHT)

Meshell Ndegeocello, 1993
Bassist Meshell Ndegeocello

Loaded with crisp energy and absolutely restless, the bass part holding down this uncompromising hip-hop/funk anthem just will not stop. Slides, fills and ghost notes make it impossible to pin down.

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Bill Gould

70 STOMP!

Brothers Johnson, 1980

Bassist Louis Johnson

Damn, this line is slick, counterparting the simple guitar line and weaving around the drums for the perfect package. We've always said that the best bass parts come from the disco sound, whether you like the music or not, and here the late Louis Johnson makes that statement sounds pretty reasonable. Just listen to that slap solo in the middle...

69 FORGET ME NOTS

Patrice Rushen, 1982

Bassist Freddie Washington

Yes, it's the *Men In Black* song. Freddie Washington's incredibly catchy popped line will not leave your brain once you've heard it. Genius, in a community where that word is overused.

68 LIKE A PRAYER

Madonna, 1989

Bassist Guy Pratt

'Like A Prayer' is a gospel workout that would have been a tenth as good without its excellent, bouncing bass part supplied by the extraordinary Guy Pratt. Listen to him go: he plays on, around and to the side of Madonna's vocal melodies, weaving a web of notes that give the song a ton of character.

67 TOO YOUNG TO DIE

Jamiroquai, 1993

Bassist Stuart Zender

This is one of the most memorable bass parts from the early Nineties, a period absolutely stuffed with great playing. You can hum or sing it more easily than the main vocal melody, which says a lot. Stuart Zender was a prodigy who could literally play lines like this in his sleep, he once told us. He really meant it – actually asleep.

66 U CAN'T HOLD NO GROOVE...

Victor Wooten, 1996

Bassist Victor Wooten

A decade before YouTube made extravagant bass parts available to everyone, you had to buy a CD and figure out what was going on – and we all attempted to do just that with Victor Wooten's debut solo album, *A Show Of Hands*. This opening cut set out his stall with a mixture of strummed chords, melodic runs and percussive techniques. It's amazing, frankly.

65 PEACHES

Stranglers, 1977

Bassist Jean-Jacques Burnel

Two seconds into 'Peaches' and you'll know what song you're listening to; five seconds later you'll be cursing Jean-Jacques Burnel for his talent and wondering how you can get that tone yourself.

PLAYING TIP

Use roundwound strings and dig your pick in hard near the bridge.

64 WHITE LINES (DON'T DO IT)

Grandmaster Flash & Melle Mel, 1983

Bassist Doug Wimbish

Covering 'Cavern' by art-rockers Liquid Liquid, the Sugar Hill label's house band bassist Doug Wimbish created a monster when the line was applied to a strident rap about the perils of cocaine abuse. Try playing it: you'll do the Es and the Gs before falling over. It's worth persevering with, however, and then having a crack at the supremely funky bass-plus-horns lick that follows the chorus.

63 TOWN CALLED MALICE

The Jam, 1982

Bassist Bruce Foxton

This superb bass-line might have been "borrowed" from any number of Motown hits ('You Can't Hurry Love' comes to mind), but it's so perfect for the Jam's gritted-teeth slab of post-punk angst that you have to forgive them. The British public responded to the song with massive enthusiasm, sending the song straight to No. 1.

62 THANK YOU (FALETTIN ME BE MICE ELF AGIN)

Sly & The Family Stone, 1970

Bassist Larry Graham

This ludicrously butt-shaking song kicks off with a simple slap and pop line which drills into your skull and refuses to let go. After a few minutes of this, you're dying to play it yourself – and it's simple enough that you'll probably nail it, too. But will you have as much funk in you as Larry?

61 KING FOR A DAY

Faith No More, 1995

Bassist Bill Gould

Pairing a crunchy tone with a melodic intro, Bill Gould stamped his presence on this deep cut from the FNM catalogue. His line is less aggressively funky than many of Gould's other parts, but it doesn't have to be: once heard, you'll want to hear it again and again.

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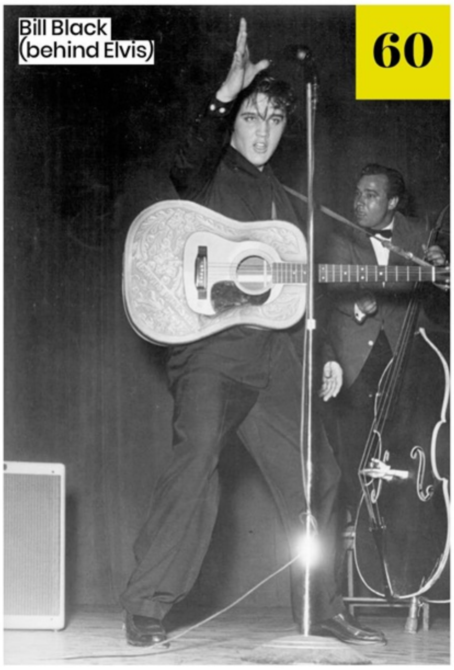
Bill Black (behind Elvis)

60

Joe Dart

54

60 HEARTBREAK HOTEL
Elvis Presley, 1956
Bassist Bill Black

If your band has no drummer, you'd better have a whole lot of dexterity and presence as a bassist. Fortunately the late Bill Black had plenty of both, delivering a sweet walking line on this none-more-classic ballad that various remasters have made more easily audible over the decades.

59 HAMMER SMASHED FACE
Cannibal Corpse, 1993
Bassist Alex Webster

Relentlessly unpleasant death metal has been Cannibal Corpse's forte for 35 years and counting, but behind the horrible song titles, lyrics and artwork lies a band of great skill. Bassist Alex Webster delivers a famous solo after this song's intro consisting of just eight notes, but it sounds like many, many more.

> **"Webster's famous solo is only eight notes, but it sounds like many, many more"**

58 REGRET
New Order, 1993
Bassist Peter Hook

New Order's unique sound in the early Nineties was based on dance-friendly beats, semi-spoken vocals and bass composed of amazing, high-register solos and supportive lines. In 'Regret', which Hooky later described as the last decent New Order song, he plays three solos, all of which are highly hummable.

57 GIVE UP THE FUNK (TEAR THE ROOF OFF THE SUCKER)
Parliament, 1976
Bassist Bootsy Collins

Just listen to Bootsy here. What he plays is so minimalist, so compelling and so damn butt-shaking that it is utterly undeniable. It's like listening to some kind of mad wizard.

56 THIS CHARMING MAN
The Smiths, 1983
Bassist Andy Rourke

The Smiths were a group at least a decade ahead of their time, doomed to be more read about than listened to during their active career, and only fully appreciated several years after the band-members had gone their separate ways. Bassist Andy Rourke is the group's unsung hero, complementing the guitar wizardry of Johnny Marr in a way that most of us could never hope to do. The fast-fingered line on 'This Charming Man' is his masterpiece.

55 ONCE IN A LIFETIME
Talking Heads, 1981
Bassist Tina Weymouth

There's so much to love about this bass part. It starts with a slide, it repeats identically and endlessly (which sounds easy to do, but isn't), and it was recorded without anyone knowing where the bars started and finished, if you believe the studio lore.

54 DEAN TOWN
Vulfpeck, 2016
Bassist Joe Dart

Mix the best of Rocco Prestia, Marcus Miller and Stevie Wonder's left hand and move from the Seventies to now, and you have Joe Dart, a true phenomenon. Here he demonstrates fast tremolo picking and tricky unison playing with the keyboard, all with a treated tone to die for.

53 ALIVE
Pearl Jam, 1991
Bassist Jeff Ament

Admit it, when you hummed along with the song 'Alive', you were just as likely to be following Ament's slick chordal fills in the verses as you were to be reproducing Eddie Vedder's vocals. Ament often used a 12-string bass, which helps to explain his presence on a ton of Pearl Jam tracks.

52 MAMMA MIA
ABBA, 1975
Bassist Mike Watson

Find this isolated bass part on YouTube and enjoy Mike Watson's expertly melodic progression, complete with ghost notes in the lead guitar breaks and semitone approach notes in the chorus. It's pop playing at its most thought-through.

PLAYING TIP

The key to this line is its organic feel. Find an isolated version on Youtube and you'll hear all sorts of glorious, uncompressed transients and off-fretboard noises.

51 SCHOOL DAYS
Stanley Clarke, 1976
Bassist Stanley Clarke

Throwing everything into the mix and changing the face of bass playing in doing so, Stanley Clarke's legendary 'School Days' features superfast pizzicato, razor-sharp pops, huge string bends and his usual disregard for convention. The song remains an object lesson for anyone interested in the inner workings of fusion bass, and a reminder to all of us that no matter how much we think we know, there's always more to learn...

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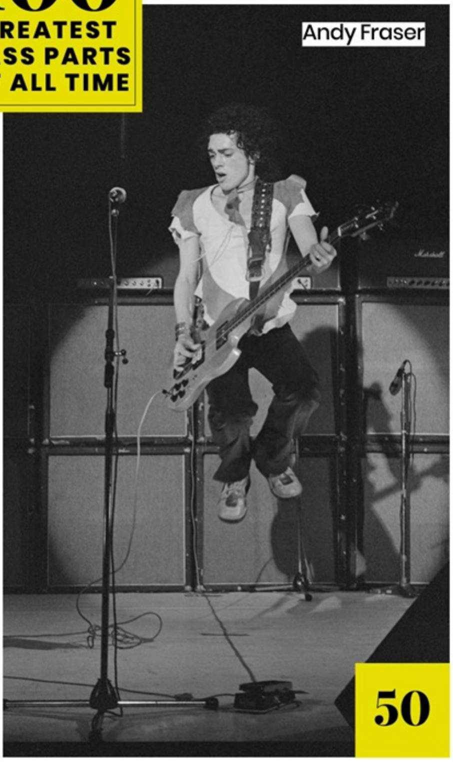

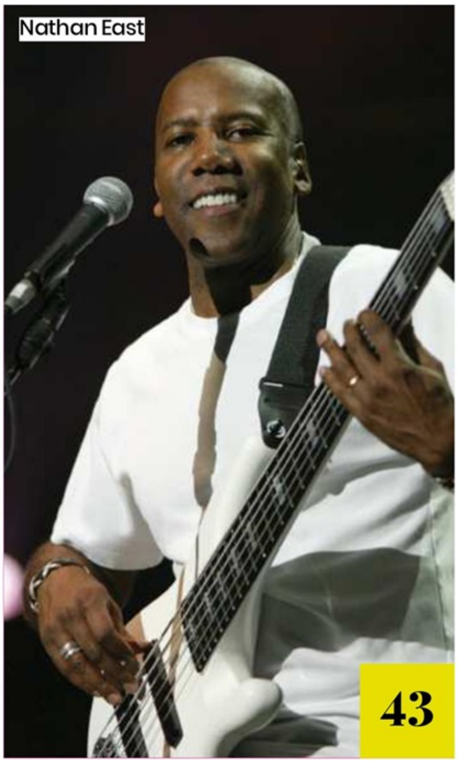

50 ALL RIGHT NOW

Free, 1970

Bassist Andy Fraser

The late Andy Fraser's superbly economical fingerstyle line towards the end of 'All Right Now', was enough to secure his status as one of the Seventies' most revered bassists. It's mixed low so you have to listen carefully to make out the chords, and it's all warm, middy tones: you can almost feel his fingertips on the strings.

49 BOOGIE WONDERLAND

Earth, Wind & Fire, 1979

Bassist Verdine White

Moving fast, rarely settling but still allowing the song to breathe, Verdine White's bass part on this massively uplifting classic is a masterclass of taste. Live, the man is unstoppable, and yet he still manages to deliver the goods with never a missed note.

48 WHAT IS HIP?

Tower Of Power, 1974

Bassist Francis 'Rocco' Prestia

Play sixteenths, they said. It'll be easy, they said... Well, it was easy for the late 'Rocco' Prestia, a humble fellow with insane plucking and left-hand muting abilities, who we met and liked a lot. He leaves behind this showcase for economical playing. Learn it in his honour.

PLAYING TIP

It's all about left-hand muting here. Keep your hand resting lightly on the strings you're not playing, or invest in a cloth mute near the nut.

47 SO WHAT

Miles Davis, 1959

Bassist Paul Chambers

There are jazz lovers in their eighties who still remember with a pleasant shiver the first time they heard 'So What', the opening song of the most influential jazz LP of all time, *Kind Of Blue*. Paul Chambers' sublime double bass and Bill Evans' plangent piano chords created one of the finest introductory passages ever, before Chambers took the song up a level with the famous, questioning riff that leads the listener towards the horns. Even 63 years later, this is heady stuff.

46 BULLET IN THE HEAD

Rage Against The Machine, 1992

Bassist Tim Commerford

The permanently-irked rap-metal quartet RATM's finest hour was undoubtedly their self-titled debut album, a highlight of which was 'Bullet In The Head'. It's the opening bass riff which qualifies the song for immortality: playing it without fret-buzz on even the most perfectly set-up bass requires skill which most of us lack, but that's never stopped us trying.

45 WHIPPING POST

Allman Brothers Band, 1969

Bassist Berry Oakley

Berry Oakley, who only made it to 24 before a road accident took his life, still had the chance to lay down some legacy lines with the Allman Brothers. One of them is this sensitive, mid-register part, on which he explores the chordal territory available with great skill.

44 LOUNGE ACT

Nirvana, 1991

Bassist Krist Novoselic

This nippy little line adds a touch of melody to this deep cut on Nirvana's *Nevermind*, with what might well be regarded as the perfect bass tone – crisp without being weak, chunky without being overpowering.

43 GET LUCKY

Daft Punk, 2013

Bassist Nathan East

It was hard to escape this song for most of the 'teens' decade, but don't hate it for that reason: Nathan East did a fantastic job of funking it up under the song's smooth textures. He neither overplays nor underplays, taking up space exactly as he should.

42 METROPOLIS – PART 1: THE MIRACLE AND THE SLEEPER

Dream Theater, 1992

Bassist John Myung

The multi-million-selling Massachusetts prog-metal quintet Dream Theater are all insanely virtuosic musicians, but they can still write actual songs. This one showcases a fantastic tapped solo from bassist John Myung, in which he says what he needs to say over a couple of chord changes and then lets someone else take over. It's a fantastic few seconds.

41 STAND BY ME

Ben E. King, 1961

Bassist Lloyd Trotman

"When the night... has come..." Genius! A 1955 tune given a Sixties facelift, 'Stand By Me' boasts an intro bass-line that, once heard, is never forgotten. Subtle, unhurried and sweet, Lloyd Trotman's line supports vocal pyrotechnics from King and a swathe of organ and guitar that almost (but not quite) renders it inaudible. We like to think of it as a metaphor for bass players: strip away the fluff and there we are, holding everything down.

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40 BADGE
Cream, 1969
Bassist Jack Bruce

Jack Bruce was best known for the hooky, imposing bass parts which he contributed to the jazz-rock trio Cream in the late Sixties, but he was also a solo artist, session player extraordinaire, musicologist and a chap who refined the approach to playing the bass, thanks to his extracurricular studies of instruments such as the viña and cello. Cream's career lasted just two years – from 1966 to '68 – but their influence has been enormous. Check out this elastic bass intro: it's one of Bruce's best.

39 GENTLEMEN TAKE POLAROIDS
Japan, 1980
Bassist Mick Karn

The late Mick Karn had his own individual fretless bass style, and tended to resent journalists who assumed he'd been influenced by Jaco Pastorius. In fact, a comparison of the two bassists' styles reveals little in common: Karn came from decidedly weirder territory, as this song demonstrates.

38 PORTRAIT OF TRACY
Jaco Pastorius, 1976
Bassist Jaco Pastorius

Who apart from Jaco Pastorius would write a love song using only bass harmonics? You could profitably study any song from Jaco's self-titled album of '76 and come out the other side a much improved bass player, but if you're keen on nailing a Jaco tune that everyone will recognise, try this one. Your grasp of natural and false harmonics will need to be on point, of course, particularly if you're being truly authentic and playing this song on a fretless – but once you've got it down, you'll be the talk of the jazz club. Aim for plenty of mids and top on your fretless, and make sure your fretting hand is perfectly in position, whether you're playing natural or false harmonics.

PLAYING TIP

Sure, this song is advanced by any standards, but get your natural harmonics down and you'll be well on the way. False harmonics are trickier, but still perfectly achievable with accurate finger placement.

37 LESSONS IN LOVE
Level 42, 1986
Bassist Mark King

1986 was the 'peak Eighties' year in many respects, not least in bass world, where our scene was supercharged by the entry into mainstream culture of advanced gear and techniques. Here's Mark King delivering

Jaco, like you didn't know

Mick Karn

a state-of-the-art bass part on one of Level 42's most memorable songs: the line is essentially an arpeggio, so it's the slap and pop which is its most challenging element.

36 YOU CAN CALL ME AL
Paul Simon, 1986
Bassist Bakithi Kumalo

No-one can play this bass solo with complete accuracy, because the laws of physics don't allow it. Bakithi Kumalo recorded this amazing run of notes, which the studio engineer then reversed and bolted onto the original part,

> **"No-one can play 'You Can Call Me Al's bass solo with complete accuracy"**

making it a musical palindrome. Still, you can give it your best shot: we all have, at some point or other.

35 GIRLS AND BOYS
Blur, 1994
Bassist Alex James

Britpop was not generally known for the funkiness of its bass parts, so it was a pleasant surprise when this popped octave line appeared in the depths of this mildly irritating song about something or other. Listen to it in detail and you'll pick up the excellent fills in the popped sections.

34 LONDON CALLING
The Clash, 1979
Bassist Paul Simonon

Paul Simonon was a master of his instrument, with his grasp of reggae and rock making his bass style unique, a fact duly noted on 'London Calling' with its super-recognisable intro. The sheer attitude in the song's instrumentation, and the obvious pop awareness in the songwriting, has made it an enduring classic.

33 TEEN TOWN
Weather Report, 1977
Bassist Jaco Pastorius

On his first full Weather Report album, Jaco still had plenty to prove, and contributed this iconic track which showcases several of his best moves. Well, he was the self-proclaimed best bass player in the world – whether plucking those sixteenths in the intro, spiralling up into the midrange, counterpointing the famous horn motif or playing in unison with Joe Zawinul's keyboard sequence. Few people can play this line accurately; even fewer can play it like Jaco did.

32 STAYIN' ALIVE
Bee Gees, 1977
Bassist Maurice Gibb

The ultimate disco song in terms of commerciality rather than cool, 'Stayin' Alive' (what does that title actually mean?) has a bass part of smaller dimensions that the gigantic lines in contemporary disco cuts by, say, Chic. It's still catchy as hell, though.

31 SLEDGEHAMMER
Peter Gabriel, 1986
Bassist Tony Levin

The enormous fretless waves that underpin Peter Gabriel's best-known song are just one of its cluster of melodic hooks, so you'll be forgiven if the line doesn't come immediately to mind. Tony Levin never, ever puts a foot wrong when it comes to bass parts, and here he proves how fearless he is on a session.

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Nate Watts and Victor Wooten

Steve Harris

30 ASHES TO ASHES

David Bowie, 1980

Bassist George Murray

The genius element of this memorable bass part is that the popped notes are relatively low in the register but high in the mix, giving them a weight and impact that such notes rarely possess because they're all about glassy treble. Few songs make you want to slide your finger under a string and pull upwards more than this one.

29 WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

Lou Reed, 1972

Bassist Herbie Flowers

Said to have been simultanously played on a bass guitar and a double bass, Herbie Flowers' famous sliding line is known the world over, adding a subtle touch to one of the darkest pop songs ever written. While Lou Reed sings his cheery tune about 'head', Flowers' line brings a touch of class to this most satisfyingly lowlife of tunes.

28 I WANT YOU BACK

Jackson 5, 1969

Bassist Wilton Felder

Relatively simple and fully joyous, the line that anchors this effusive song helped to propel the Jackson 5, and by extension their kid singer Michael, into a set of careers that exist to this day. Wilton Felder doesn't get the acclaim that he deserves, so we're glad you voted him this high on our list.

27 SIR DUKE

Stevie Wonder, 1976

Bassist Nate Watts

Yes, you wish your fingers were this fast, your muting so good and your tone so sweet. We all do. Fortunately we have bass players like Nate Watts to show us what can be achieved when your technical skill matches the vision of your bandleader. An astounding performance.

26 DOMINATION

Pantera, 1990

Bassist Rex Brown

Founded by brothers 'Diamond' (later 'Dimebag') Darrell Abbott on guitar and Vinnie Paul Abbott on drums, Pantera's early productions tended to focus on those instruments, leaving Rex Brown's expert bass parts low in the mix. Check out his part behind this guitar solo, where we finally get to hear him in full, inventive flow. Pantera's later albums feature Brown prominently in the mix, fortunately for us.

25 WALKING ON THE MOON

The Police, 1979

Bassist Sting

The simplicity of this bass part – it's almost too much to call it an actual line – is its strength. For most of the song, Sting plays three notes and lets the last one ring while he handles vocals; for the rest of it, he plays a simple, reggae-like line. Those three notes make the song work, and there's a lesson right there.

PLAYING TIP

The difficulty here comes when you try to sing the song and play the line at the same time. Sting told us that he slows songs down to a fraction of their regular speed when he rehearses them, which sounds like a solid tip to us.

24 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

Iron Maiden, 1980

Bassist Steve Harris

One of those rare songs – a long, multi-sectioned composition that doesn't outstay its welcome - Iron Maiden's sumptuous 'Phantom Of The Opera' is, like all Maiden tunes, a bass player's dream. Bandleader and primary songwriter Steve Harris is a musician of superb skill and panache, combining his love of 70s prog and punk to form a sleek but melodic approach that was already fully evolved on Maiden's first album. The bass solo – a simple triad that moves down a tone for two successive bars before moving back up and repeating – is a thing of sheer beauty.

23 THE LOVECATS

The Cure, 1983

Bassist Phil Thornalley

As a perfect example of the application of the upright bass in modern pop music, the line which propels 'The Lovecats' is insanely catchy, oozing the sound of wood. After the first 100 listens or so (this song has been a radio and indie-club staple for nearly 40 years), Robert Smith's wailed, appropriately feline vocals and the honky-tonk piano may start to set your teeth on edge a little, but there's no arguing with the quality of that bass part.

22 WOULD?

Alice In Chains, 1993

Bassist Mike Starr

This bleak song, written by Alice In Chains' guitarist Jerry Cantrell for his departed friend Andrew Wood, has a suitably threatening bass-line, which also introduces the song. The bass player, Mike Starr, is also no longer with us, having succumbed to a prescription drug overdose in 2011.

21 SWEET CHILD O'MINE

Guns N'Roses, 1987

Bassist Duff McKagan

This song is on this list because of the bass solo that appears a few bars in, a sweet little melody that introduces the song's D-C-G structure way past the octave. Duff McKagan's scooped tone may sound a little Eighties at this point, but it works perfectly here, giving his opening melody plenty of cut.

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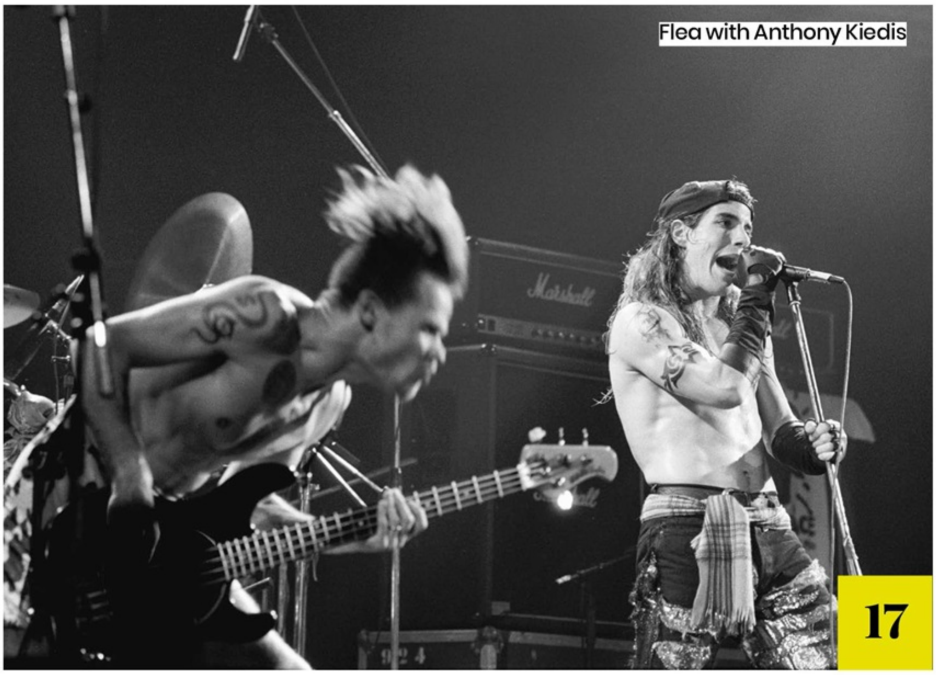
John McVie

18



Flea with Anthony Kiedis

17

20 TOMMY THE CAT

Primus, 1991

Bassist Les Claypool

Break down this bass-line and you'll come up with a combination of chord strums, ghost notes, palm slaps and pops, and although it seems pretty fiendish, you'll get it down if you play it at a slow tempo. The difficulty comes when you try to play it at the same speed as Les Claypool does, but given enough dedicated practice you'll get there. Mind you, the bass part isn't the entirety of the song. When Claypool sings it, or speaks it in reality, he's ranting from the perspective of an alleycat who fancies himself as something of a Casanova. This is what makes the song so nuts, although that Olympic-level bass-line certainly helps.

19 GOOD TIMES

Chic, 1979

Bassist Bernard Edwards

While the punk wars raged and the roots of electro and hip-hop spread, Chic knocked out an effortless sequence of timeless disco singles, each of which evoked images of a night-time club existence that unified people and nations under one ineffable groove. This was an illusion, of course, but it says much for the super-clean, super-euphoric music of Nile Rodgers and Bernard Edwards that to this day the songs sound as if they come from another planet. It would be inaccurate to suggest that 'Good Times' represents Bernard Edwards' finest playing, as his career was full of moments of pure genius such as this one. However, the unparalleled bass-line in this song is probably his best-known work, and so many of us have learned from it that it's impossible not to include it in the higher echelons of this list. It is a production and performance masterpiece, and its core message – that these are the good times – is a useful lesson to remember.

> **"'Good Times' is among Bernard Edwards' finest ever bass-playing"**

18 THE CHAIN

Fleetwood Mac, 1977

Bassist John McVie

Like this song needs any introduction for bass players... John McVie's slippery riff in A begins the second half of the track, establishing a faster tempo and causing Formula One fans to surge from their seats every time it comes on the TV. Synonymous for British bassists, at least, with F1 commentator Murray Walker's crazed wail and the screech of engines, the line repeats until the end of the song, surrounded by Stevie Nicks' layered backing vocals and Mick Fleetwood's driving (yep) beat. Unforgettable.

PLAYING TIP

It's bass solo time, and what does that mean? A surge of adrenaline, which may well cause you to play faster than the song requires. Back off, hotshot, and remember your tempo.

17 GIVE IT AWAY

Red Hot Chili Peppers, 1991

Bassist Flea

A whole host of bands – genuinely or otherwise funky, but almost all categorised by a bass player who slapped their instrument – came to prominence in America and Europe in the early Nineties, including 24-7 Spyz, Infectious Grooves, Living Colour, Mr. Bungle, Rage Against The Machine and Shootyz Groove. Many of these acts owed at least some aspect of their style to the Red Hot Chili Peppers and their bassist Michael 'Flea' Balzary. Without a doubt, when it comes to post-1990 funk bass, Flea is the most influential musician of our times. Inspired to their greatest heights yet by überbeard Rick Rubin, the Chilis recorded an astounding fifth album in *Blood Sugar Sex Magik*, still their finest hour by a long shot. 'Give It Away' was a monster of a single, with a bass-line that more or less made up the whole song with its famous, liquid slide motif and some beautifully dexterous fills. There's some chickengrease guitar and a thunderous drum pattern on top of the bass, of course, not to mention Anthony Kiedis' rap about tolerance and spreading the love, but this song is Flea's through and through.

16 HYSTERIA

Muse, 2003

Bassist Chris Wolstenholme

The precision of Chris Wolstenholme's fingers on the riff that opens and pins down 'Hysteria' has to be seen to be believed. Although it'll take anyone a while to master, composed as it is of multiple high-register hammer-ons, the real challenge in playing it is keeping it clean while the massive distortion it requires threatens to swamp any clarity. Good luck. When Muse released 'Hysteria' in 2003 and the bass community heard Wolstenholme's introduction for the first time, the number of 'What pedals is he using?' questions that appeared at bass forums almost broke the internet. Oddly, though, you can recreate that tone with 95 per cent accuracy using a single distortion pedal of your choice, as long as your picking is super-tight and you stay away from bright mids and top end. Make that overdrive too aggressive, and you'll create volume spikes all over the place – so consider a judicious bit of compression to avoid deafening the rest of the band. If you don't have the budget to copy Chris's pedalboard, find yourself a cool bass overdrive and roll the top end right off.

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John Paul Jones (left)

Louis Johnson

15 SCHISM
Tool, 2001
Bassist Justin Chancellor

With its many time signature changes, 'Schism' deters many of us from having a go at Justin Chancellor's beautifully-played introductory bass part – which is a shame, because aside from the problematic counting you have to do to get it done, it's a thing of melodic beauty. Chancellor himself described it as completely doable, for any bassist with a grasp of hammer-ons, when we last spoke to him. Be brave, get a metronome and dive in!

John Entwistle

14 PEACE SELLS
Megadeth, 1986
Bassist David Ellefson

Founded by ex-Metallica guitarist Dave Mustaine in 1984 alongside bassist David Ellefson, Megadeth released a sequence of classic albums, fuelled by Mustaine's world-class guitar pyrotechnics and knack for a catchy chorus. The group's first major hit was its second album, *Peace Sells... But Who's Buying?* (1986), with its lead cut 'Peace Sells' led off with this fantastic bass-line. Written by Mustaine and played with absolute precision by Ellefson, the part even soundtracked MTV News for a few years.

13 MY GENERATION
The Who, 1965
Bassist John Entwistle

After two verses in what is effectively the first punk-rock song ever written, you can hear one of the first ever bass guitar solos. It's a still-stunning essay in four parts, played on a Fender Jazz by John Entwistle. It's not that the solo is unplayable, although it'll still give you a few problems, believe us. The remarkable thing is that it happened at all, in an era when the bass guitar was regarded solely as a supporting instrument.

12 RAMBLE ON
Led Zeppelin, 1969
Bassist John Paul Jones

John Paul Jones had big plans when he wrote the opening line to 'Ramble On'. First, he stepped all over Jimmy Page's gorgeous acoustic intro with a fantastic ascending motif in the upper register. Then he threw in a three-note lick after the first line of the chorus (after "Ramble on!") which in turn sets up a bar in which he performs very fast hammer-ons, making the bass the focus of the line when there's plenty going on already, not least Robert Plant's wailed vocal. Maximum respect to him for stamping his presence onto the biggest stadium-folk-blues-rock act of all time.

11 BILLIE JEAN
Michael Jackson, 1982
Bassist Louis Johnson

The late Louis Johnson's classic bass-line made 'Billie Jean' one of the similarly late Michael Jackson's best songs, a career highlight that still stands up today, regardless of the controversies that plagued the departed 'King Of Pop'. Counterpointing the subtle backing vocals and synth wash, the line drives the song forward as it builds, leading to an understated overall tone which contrasts perfectly with Jackson's emotional wails about the girl who is, famously, not his lover.

PLAYING TIP

This deceptively simple line is easy to mess up. The key is to use a fingering pattern that is maximally efficient so that you don't end up with unnecessary string-crossing.

© 11: Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images 12: Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images 13: Chris Morphet/Redferns

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Geezer Butler
10

Cliff Burton
09

08
Roger Waters

> **“With not one but three bass solos – all of them radically different – ‘Orion’ is the *Puppets* song that all bass players must listen to...”**

10 N.I.B.
Black Sabbath, 1970
Bassist Geezer Butler

Black Sabbath were the first real heavy metal band, whatever you read elsewhere. Much more than amassing a platinum and gold disc collection that equates to over 100 million records sold, this unassuming quartet pioneered an entirely new branch of the rock evolutionary tree: before Sabbath, “heavy” music was merely blues-rock, amped just that bit louder.

Sabbath’s self-titled debut album is packed with classic songs, but for our purposes let’s head straight to ‘N.I.B.’, which begins with a wonderful blues solo (‘Bassically’) from bassist Terence ‘Geezer’ Butler. This part stretches out for 40 seconds, aided by a wah pedal.

Also the band’s primary lyricist, Butler explained the song’s unusual title with the words: “Originally it was titled ‘Nib’, which was [drummer] Bill Ward’s beard, which looked like a pen nib because it was pointy, so we used to call him Nib. When I wrote ‘N.I.B.’, I couldn’t think of a title for the song, so I just called it ‘Nib’, after Bill’s beard. To make it more intriguing I put punctuation marks in there to make it ‘N.I.B.’. By the time it got to America, they translated it to ‘Nativity In Black’.”

PLAYING TIP
Get a wah pedal and learn how to use it – then practise your blues-box shapes and you’re good to go.

09 ORION
Metallica, 1986
Bassist Cliff Burton

The San Francisco-based metal quartet Metallica is heavy music’s biggest-selling band, and has been since the mid-Nineties. The number of albums sold over their three decades in business is now approaching 100 million, and the group continues to play the world’s biggest stadiums with little indication that any of its members are slowing down.

In retrospect, it is possible to identify certain key points in Metallica’s trajectory at which the band took a significant step forward, whether in terms of musical style or commercial visibility. One of these came when the original bassist Ron McGovney was replaced with San Francisco native Cliff Burton. A move to Burton’s home town followed, and the new line-up became Metallica’s most critically-acclaimed incarnation, going on to release two genre-defining albums in *Ride The Lightning* and *Master Of Puppets*, the latter of which is usually regarded as the band’s finest work.

With not one but three bass solos – all of them radically different – ‘Orion’ is the *Puppets* song that all bass players must listen to. Burton, who died a few months after the album was released, wrote this instrumental, and it shows. The song leads off with a faded-in soup of bass notes, laden with effects, and fades away again after a heavy guitar section to a classical bass motif that is mixed low in order to get your attention. Finally, Cliff lays down a blistering, distorted solo at the end of the song that many people mistake for a guitar part.

PLAYING TIP
Chords are your friend here, loaded with overdrive but with the top end rolled right off. Aim for a wall of warm sounds, rather than a spiky screech.

08 MONEY
Pink Floyd, 1973
Bassist Roger Waters

Roger Waters, although never a technician in the classic sense when it came to bass, excelled himself as a songwriter with this world-class bass part written in 7/8 (or 7/4; opinions vary), apart from the bit with the guitar solo, when you can relax because it’s in 4/4. The extreme clarity of the line, and the hellish cacophony of cash registers against which it appears, makes it a mandatory part for all progressive rock-loving bassists to learn.

PLAYING TIP
You can count to seven, can’t you? Say the numbers out loud as you play the bass part. We guarantee you’ll find it much easier than you thought.

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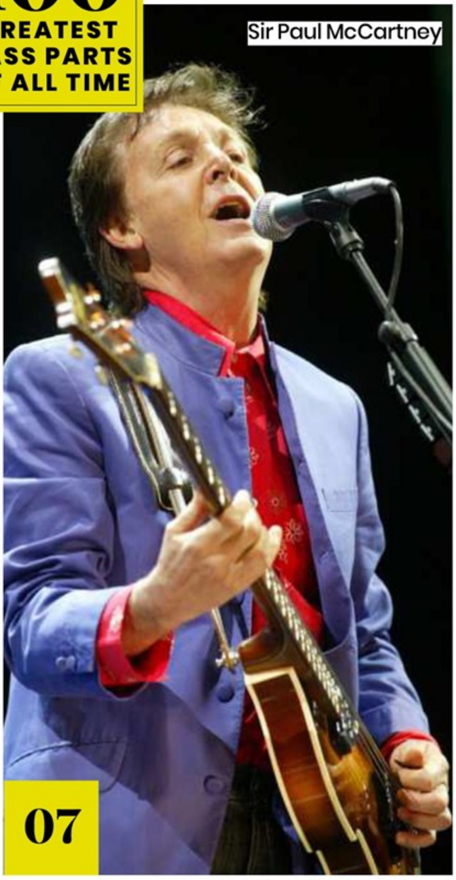

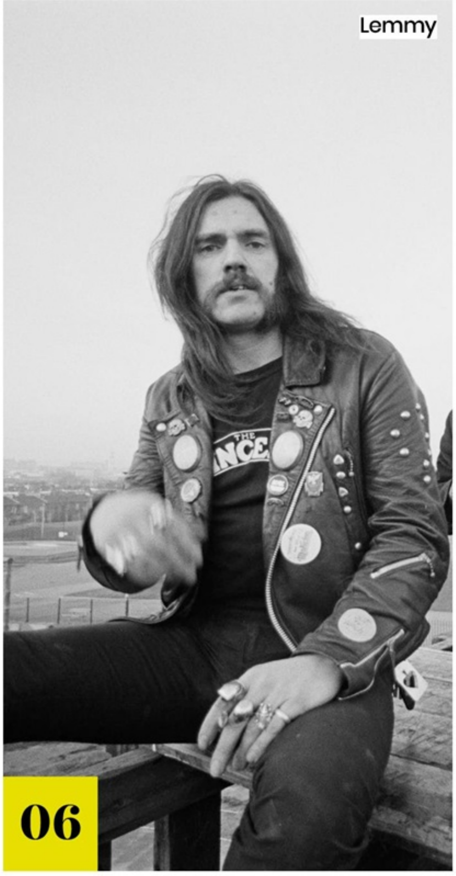

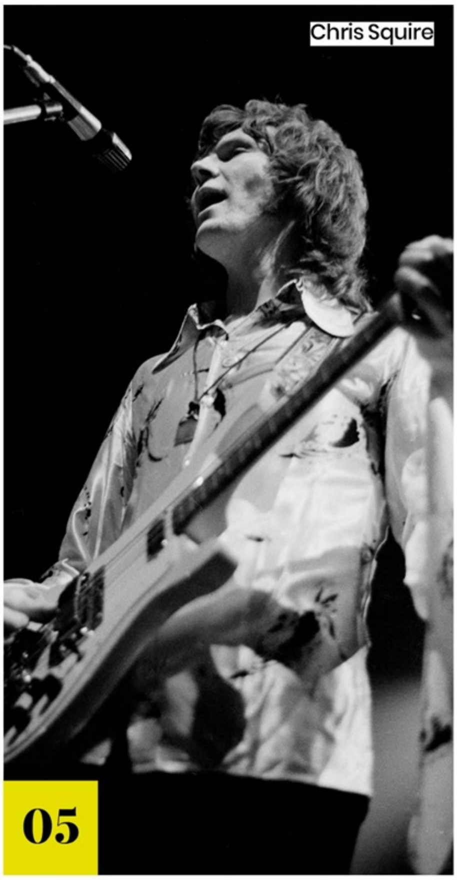

07

COME TOGETHER

Beatles, 1969

Bassist Paul McCartney

How do you make a song intro out of a couple of bass hammer-ons, some studio echo and a bit of wooden percussion? Like this. By 1969 Paul McCartney had taken his mastery of the bass guitar to levels that most people could never access, largely by focusing on songwriting and not worrying too much about whether the bass sounded right or not. In doing so he made his bass parts – all of them – sound perfect, even when they lacked a real presence in the Fab Four's album mixes. This song is, perhaps, the pinnacle of his bass playing.

The parent album, *Abbey Road*, is sometimes neglected in All-Time Best Album polls in favour of the more technicolour *Sgt. Pepper* and the darker, less orthodox *Revolver*. Still, the LP is a shimmering, never-predictable array of songs and song fragments, as progressive as anything the quartet ever recorded and stuffed full of creative twists and turns, with the Beatles' chaotic final years together coming messily to a close.

PLAYING TIP

Use flatwound strings and dig in hard with a pick for a decent approximation of the 'Come Together' tone. The line's higher notes will particularly benefit from the flatwounds' signature thud, and there's no mistaking that psychedelic upper register.

06

ACE OF SPADES

Motörhead, 1980

Bassist Lemmy

The much-missed Ian 'Lemmy' Kilmister's famously filthy bass sound – not, as he revealed to us a couple of years back, the result of any effects, just wide-open mids and volume – isn't for everyone, but for millions of Motörhead acolytes the world over, it's nothing less than the sweetest sound ever committed to vinyl.

Lemmy was at his economical peak on 'Ace Of Spades', intro-ing the song with that simple, two-note riff and sliding upwards as the guitars join in. "I'll tell you the controls, left to right. Presence is at three o'clock. Bass is off. Middle is full. Treble is off. Volume is at three o'clock," he told us, between swigs of his Jack Daniel's.

> **"The sweetest sound ever committed to vinyl"**

In the song, he invokes all the classic heavy metal tropes – dying young, living hard, reducing life down to the turn of a card, the roll of a dice and the rattle of ice cubes against a glass of bourbon. Clichés they may be, but they were Motörhead's clichés, and they sound so, so good to this day.

PLAYING TIP

Drink bourbon. Get a heavy pick. Hit hard.

05

ROUNDABOUT

Yes, 1971

Bassist Chris Squire

Chris Squire did more for the art of the progressive-rock bass-line than any other bass player apart from Paul McCartney and Tony Levin, and on 'Roundabout' he hit an early peak. The gritty tone of this line only enhanced its snappy, fast-fingered qualities, and it's energising just keeping up with the many changes the line goes through as the song changes form. Staying on top of the dizzying keyboard and vocal acrobatics, Squire's fast-moving part is a high point in the early prog canon.

The part itself, a sixteenths-heavy showcase for Squire's flashing fingers, was unusual for the time because it featured a trebly edge and a crunchy distortion without losing clarity. How the great man achieved this tone was a mystery until the mid-Seventies, when he revealed that he had customised his Rickenbacker so that it sent two signals, one per pickup. The bridge pickup went to a guitar amp – hence the clear top end.

PLAYING TIP

You read our Squire piece in ***Bass Player*** 423, right? If so you'll remember that he played with a technique similar to that of a pinch harmonic, where the edge of his thumb touched a note immediately after his pick plucked it.

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04

YYZ

Rush, 1981

Bassist Geddy Lee

"Neil [Peart, drums] and I wrote 'YYZ' one day when, for some reason, Alex [Lifeson, guitar] wasn't around," said Geddy Lee of Rush to *Classic Rock*. "Neil and I just went out to the barn at Le Studio, where the gear was set up, and we started putting 'YYZ' together as a bass and drum jam song. Then Al came in and added his licks, and before you know it the song was finished."

Let's be clear: 'YYZ' is a mind-expanding composition. Odd times make the intro and many of the sections tricky if you're not paying attention. The bass solos are complex, featuring harmonics at one point, and the unison playing between bass, guitar and drums requires split-second precision. At least it's an instrumental, so no-one has to worry about vocals.

There is also the matter of Geddy's tone, part Rickenbacker crunch, part floating-thumb attack. As he told us a couple of years ago, "I have this goofy picking hand style, and that was a result of frustration on my part. I wanted more twang and I wanted a slappy sound, but I never really felt comfortable doing that slap and thump thing – so I figured out another way of getting the rhythm I wanted out of the bass, and turning it into a kind of a pop. You know, there's a tone to that style of playing that loses some note and doesn't have that same drive – it changes the genre instantly. I developed a way that I could maintain the genre and keep it a little more driving, but it required me to do this goofy thing – replicating using a pick, without using a pick." If that sounds doable, more power to you.

To this day, 'YYZ' is a monster, both as a piece of music and as a commercial milestone. The parent album, *Moving Pictures*, gave Rush their first real success: as Geddy added in *CR*, "*Moving Pictures* was such a huge record for us. That level of success was like nothing we had ever experienced before. But we had a lot of 'moments' with that record – it was a tough one to finish... But after a lot of struggling, we nailed it and it was so powerful. We were going, 'Shit, where did that come from?'"

PLAYING TIP

There are no shortcuts here: you'll need to rehearse this song many, many times to even come close to playing it fluently. With a slightly crunchy tone, a grasp of harmonics and a dose of commitment, you'll get there.

Geddy Lee (right) with Alex Lifeson

04

John Deacon

03

David Bowie and Annie Lennox deliver 'Under Pressure'

03

UNDER PRESSURE

Queen & David Bowie, 1981

Bassist John Deacon

It's D. And it's A. And it's D again! One of John Deacon's most instantly recognisable lines, the 'Under Pressure' riff is perfectly counterpointed by a piano stab, a live-sounding vocal and guitar, and passionate vocals from the much-missed Mercury and Bowie.

Queen & Adam Lambert touring bassist Neil Fairclough tells us: "This line is played with a pick, so it's very different from the other Queen song in this list for that reason. I use my 1974 P-Bass with roundwounds, although there are times when I've listened to it and thought 'Are those actually flatwounds?' In the Eighties, John used a pick more often than he had done previously: for example, he'd always played 'Now I'm Here' with his fingers before, but later he played it with a pick.

He adds: "Of course, you can play 'Under Pressure' with your fingers and there's absolutely nothing wrong with that, but the mechanics of playing with a pick – and having that hard hit of its edge on the string – is what makes that line sing."

PLAYING TIP

For an authentic reproduction of this line, play it only with downstrokes, apart from the three sixteenths at the back end, where you can use alternate picking. Depending on the tempo, you may be able to pull that bit off with downstrokes too, but make sure your picking hand is warmed up first... and don't drop your pick!

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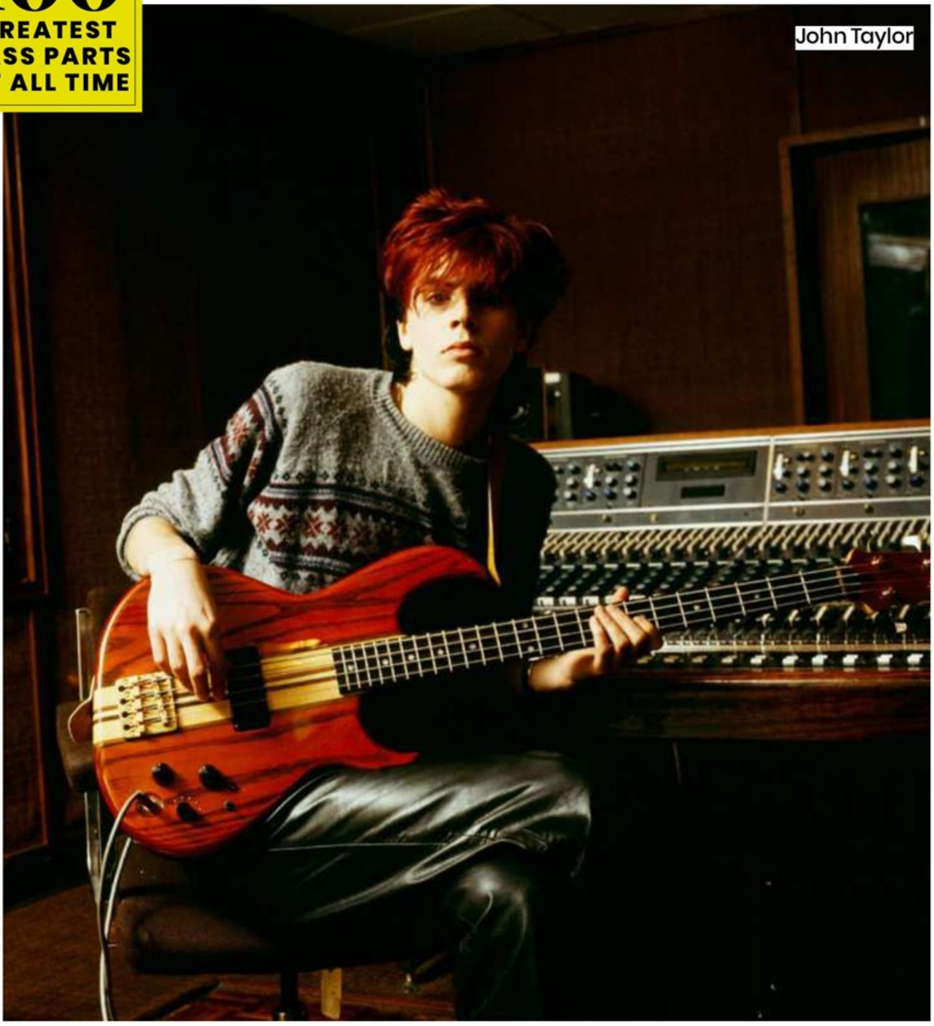
John Taylor

02
RIO
Duran Duran, 1982
Bassist John Taylor

Most people can recall the moment they became attached to a specific band, and so it was in early May 1982 that I heard 'Rio' for the first time on the radio. At that moment, I became a fan of Duran Duran for the rest of my life. That single also caught the ear of the music-buying public around the world, and the parent album *Rio* was released in the same month, eventually reaching number two in the UK and number 6 in the US.

With its heady mix of rock, disco and synth-power pop, a quartet of hit singles and iconic videos, *Rio* was everywhere in 1982 and '83. The songs featured the bass-playing skills of John Taylor at the forefront of his band's sound, while his tone and playing style was copied by thousands of bassists. When you consider his age – a mere 21 – at the time this album was recorded, and also that he'd only been playing bass for a few years, you begin to appreciate what a player he was.

Taylor was regularly seen with Aria basses, in particularly the Aria Pro II SB1000. He'd used an SB600 on Duran's self-titled debut album in 1981, and replaced that bass for *Rio* with a shiny new SB1200 courtesy of Aria, who were now using JT in their advertising. The new bass featured twin pickups and active electronics as per the SB1000. He used Peavey amplification at the time, and it's likely that his bass tracks were recorded with a mix of DI and a miked-up cabinet. He also used Superwound 606 PSD strings from the Rotosound stable, with exposed string cores.

The title track starts the album and, as well as being one of Duran Duran's signature tracks, it features perhaps Taylor's most famous bass-line, written with more than a tip of the hat to his idol, Bernard Edwards of Chic. The tightly syncopated groove propels the track forward and isn't for the faint hearted: a guaranteed finger-twister.

Rio is an amazing album to this day. Looking back, it's obvious that Duran knew they had to deliver a killer second album to build upon the success of the first – and boy, did they come up with the goods.

Mike Brooks

PLAYING TIP

Taylor played fingerstyle, resting his thumb on the pickup of his Aria bass and plucking directly above it for a mids-heavy tone. Influenced by Bernard Edwards, he played his lines very cleanly, emphasising octave notes. Take the time to play those higher notes with commitment, and work on your tremolo picking in the approach notes.

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John Deacon is now retired from public view, but that doesn't stop us from writing about him. Congratulatlons from us, JD!

© Rob Verharst/Redferns

01

ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST

Queen, 1980

Bassist John Deacon

One of the most recognised bass-lines of all time, 'Another One Bites The Dust' is often recognised as the genius moment when Queen went disco. In terms of sheer in-the-pocketness, this beautifully warm, clean line has few equals, so it's no surprise that it makes the top of your list. Is that famous A-G-E line as easy to play as it sounds, or are there hidden challenges? There's only one person we can really ask...

"The most important thing about this bass-line is the note lengths," says Queen & Adam Lambert touring bassist, Neil Fairclough. "If you play the notes too long it sounds wrong, and if you play them too short, it sounds staccato. Personally, I just do my best John Deacon impression, with a little bit of freedom in the breakdown. I do a little pop with my thumb before Brian [May, guitar] comes in, just to check that the tone isn't too clicky. I sometimes do little things like that without getting in the way. They're very laid back about it: they say 'Don't feel you have to play everything that John played', but of course you feel that you should do it exactly right, because that's what the songs deserve."

Live, you might be surprised at Fairclough's choice of bass on this song, given the mids-free tone of the original recording. "I use a Stingray, because I read that on the original, John used a Music Man with flatwounds, believe it or not," says Fairclough. "I went to Abbey Road studios before the *Bohemian Rhapsody* film was released in 2018, and they recorded me playing in the scene where the actor playing John shows them the bass part. They wanted the part as it would have sounded in the rehearsal room. It was very strange to hear my part up there on the screen, but very flattering too.

"I think the appeal of this bass-line is down to its simplicity: it's not just bass players who know it – Joe Public knows it too. The entirety of the song is in the bass-line, isn't it? I love playing it every night, because one of the great things about playing with these guys is that they're old school and they don't play to backing tracks or a click. Some nights it might be slightly faster or slower, but that's part of being a real band. They're Queen, and they live and breathe the music."

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YOU'VE HAD YOUR SAY... NOW WE'LL HAVE OURS!

Our writers and friends nominate their favourite bass parts...

BP WRITERS

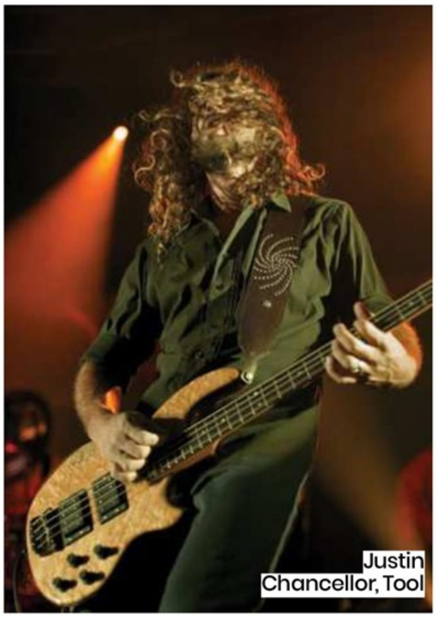
Antonio Angotti
Stevie Wonder, 'Do I Do'
Duff Battye
Karnivool, 'New Day'
Jamie Blaine
Chic, 'Good Times'
Silvia Bluejay
Stray Cats, 'Rock This Town'
Bob Brinkman
Yes, 'Roundabout'
Mike Brooks
Level 42, 'Kansas City Milkman' (live)
Dave Clarke
Chic, 'Dance Dance Dance'
Joe Daly
Alice In Chains, 'Rotten Apple'
Hywel Davies
Metallica, 'Orion'
Chris Gill
Pleasure, 'Glide'
Ian Glasper
Rancid, 'Maxwell Murder'
Ryan Madora
Esperanza Spalding
'I Know You Know'
Phil Mann
Blockheads
'Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick'
Joel McIver
Faith No More, 'King For A Day'
Ellen O'Reilly
Anderson .Paak, 'Come Down'
Chloe Peacock
Frank Turner, 'Untainted Love'
Joe Shooman
Motörhead, 'Ace Of Spades'
Alison Richter
A Taste Of Honey
'Boogie Oogie Oogie'
Kevin Sanders
Go West, 'We Close Our Eyes'
Amit Sharma
Kyuss, 'El Rodeo'
Joe Shooman
Motörhead, 'Ace Of Spades'
Bryan R Tyler
Tool, 'Lateralus'
Dan Veall
Spock's Beard, 'Thoughts Pt II'

FRIENDS, COLLEAGUES, BASSISTS

Tony Bacon
Chic, 'Good Times'
Becky Baldwin
Testament, 'Souls Of Black'
Chris Bird (*Total Guitar*)
Red Hot Chili Peppers
'Johnny, Kick A Hole In The Sky'
Tom Bowlus (*Bass Gear*)
Thomas Dolby, 'Airhead'
Victor Brandt
Terrorizer, 'Fear Of Napalm'
Ariane Cap
Paul Simon, 'You Can Call Me Al'
Chris Childs
Beatles, 'Something'
Al Cisneros
Linval Thompson
'Jah Jah Dreader Than Dread'
Chris Dekker (*De Bassist*)
Golden Earring, 'Radar Love'
Jamie Dickson (*Guitarist*)
John Martyn, 'Solid Air'
Neil Fairclough
Steely Dan, 'Green Earrings'
Lorenzo Feliciati
Weather Report, 'River People'
Daniel Firth
Cynic, 'Sentiment'
Ed Friedland
Elis Regina, 'Amor Até O Fim'
Stu Hamm
Michael Manring
'The Enormous Room'
Steve Harvey
Paul Simon
'You Can Call Me Al'
Joe Hubbard
Harvey Mason, 'Phantazia'
Michael Manring
Johan Sebastian Bach
'The Art Of Fugue'
Neville Marten (*Guitar Techniques*)
Stevie Wonder,
'I Was Made To Love Her'
Rachel Rhodes
The Who, 'The Real Me'
Chris Scapelliti (*Guitar Player*)
Thomas Dolby, 'Dissidents'

Paul Sips
David Sanborn, 'Run For Cover'
Dave Swift
Jackson 5, 'Darling Dear'
Jeroen Paul Thesseling
Death, 'Cosmic Sea'
Tony Visconti
Paul Simon, 'Graceland'
Cody Wright
Carles Benavent, 'Estamos Ahí'

Bakithi Kumalo, saluted for 'You Can Call Me Al'


Justin Chancellor, Tool

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NAMM 2022

The first post-pandemic NAMM Show had a lot riding on it, so we were pleased to see that plenty of new bass products made an appearance over in sunny California. Is your next bass, amp or stompbox among them?

Report: Matt Owen, Matt Parker, Jackson Maxwell, Joe Daly **Photography:** Getty, Joe Daly

After an online event in 2021, the annual NAMM Show returned in person back in June, and we were on hand at the familiar venue of the Anaheim Convention Center, in the not-so-familiar month of June. After cancelling this year's Summer NAMM show in Nashville and shifting the flagship January event to June 3 to 5, the National Association of Music Merchants promised a 'greatest hits' gear event, which sounded pretty good to us.

This year's company roster was a little different to previous shows – there was no Fender or Gibson, for starters – but there was still plenty of bass goodness to enjoy. These are just some of the highlights…

We began with **Ernie Ball**, who unveiled a new edition of the StingRay 5 in celebration of the model's 35th anniversary. It sports an ash body with a spalted top boasting a thin veneer of figured maple, and a roasted figured maple neck with an ebony fretboard sporting copper pearlescent block inlays. Like its StingRay 5 siblings, the bass boasts a single bridge humbucker and a three-band EQ active preamp, with 18 volts of clean headroom, a master volume knob, and a three-way blade pickup switch. It will be available in a Spalted Sunburst finish, with a certificate of authenticity, in August.

The new Darkray 5, reviewed in BP 426

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Hanging out at Rickenbacker

© Getty

An amped-up J-Bass

Check out the ESP basses on the left

© Getty

EB also added to its DarkRay concept – a StingRay bass fitted with onboard effects courtesy of Darkglass Electronics – with some swanky new finishes and a five-string model. The DarkRay 5 is outfitted with a new two- band EQ preamp designed specifically for the five-string model. Also onboard are three tones – clean, Alpha (distortion), and Omega (fuzz), each of which are tweakable via a gain knob and blend control. Volume, treble and bass controls allow for further tonal tweaking, with a three-way lever switch and neat color-coded LED ring included to help users switch between the trio of tones. A review is coming in *BP*'s next issue.

This year's company roster was a little different to previous NAMM shows, but there was still plenty of bass goodness for us to enjoy

We also enjoyed **Reverend**'s new Decision bass, released to celebrate the brand's 25th anniversary with a sleek Metallic Silver Freeze colourway. It features a korina body, and comes equipped with P-Blade neck and Jazz Bomb bridge pickups. The four-string also flashes a pickup pan control, which is said to dial in a range of percussive funk and focused thump tones.

ESP has bolstered its LTD bass lineup with no fewer than 16 new Deluxe and Signature models. Most basses arrived with either new aesthetics or altered spec sheets: the Phoenix Series, B Series, F Series and GB Series have all been treated to new-look basses, with elegant finishes such as Candy Apple Red Satin, See Thru Black Cherry, Black Metal, Violet Andromeda Satin and Silver Sunburst Satin all making their debuts. We also eyeballed new signature basses for Lamb Of God's John Campbell and Behemoth's Tomasz Wróblewski, as well as the long-awaited return of the LTD Deluxe M-1004.

Ashdown, who are celebrating their 25th anniversary with new EVO V and ABM-400 Limited Edition amp heads, also introduced

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> **"From a bass perspective, there's plenty to cover..."**

a rackmount preamp version of their 'Little Stubby' head, the CTM Valve Pre.

The desktop-friendly unit promises vintage warmth and punch thanks to its ECC81, ECC82 and ECC83 tube configuration, and has a control layout that features parameters for Drive, Feedback, Bass, Middle, Treble and Volume. The Feedback control is the driving force behind the Valve Pre's tone, and is said to be able to harness a range of old school, vintage valve amp tones and more modern, mid-heavy sounds. The sensitivity toggle switch, which flicks between high and low modes, has also returned, as has an FX send and return that aims to maintain the purity of your signal chain.

The NAMM team have just announced that their next show will take place in April 2023, before a return to the regular January event in 2024 – so all being well, we'll see you there. Knock on wood!

© Getty

Matt Spatol of Daring Greatly

© Getty

Upright citizen: Caylen Bryant

© Getty

Ashdown's new CTM Valve preamp rackmount unit: "vintage warmth and punch."

NAMM Bound

Joe Daly sums up the role of NAMM in 2022. Post-pandemic, what are the real advantages of the esteemed annual event?

NAMM turned out to be largely the same old affair as usual, which I think is a good thing. The big dogs — **Fender** and **Gibson**, most notably — were absent, but the cumulative effect was far less significant than I anticipated. The floors were still full and the organisers blocked out the basement this year, which is usually for the smallest vendors - that seemed to be the most conspicuous difference. Everybody else was on the main three floors. This was also the first year that NAMM was open to the public — anybody could buy a pass online — but non-members have always played a significant part in the convention, so the effect was negligible.

From a bass perspective, there was plenty to cover. Big brands like **Ernie Ball**, **Ibanez**, **ESP** and **Rickenbacker** still brought a show of force, introducing a galaxy of new offerings, from the simple to the extremely high end – like the $10K Thundercat Bruner model from Ibanez. The absence of Fender and Gibson paved the way for the smaller shops – these guys were now front and center on the main floor. I wonder if this turned out to be a good thing for the little guy? Dealers were still showing up with money to spend, and a long list of smaller, boutique vendors and models caught my fancy.

NAMM also consolidated a lot of the smaller, high-end shops in the centre of the main floor in a Boutique Guitar Showcase, and that area was very busy. I chatted with Sheldon **Dingwall** for a bit and he was as busy as ever. I also caught a cool moment of him and Stu Hamm talking about the implications of variable string length – they were really going deep into harmonics and intonation.

My take is that the rise of the independent luthier is very much a real and continually expanding phenomenon, and I suspect that hindsight will show that these guys saved NAMM while expanding their own respective footprints. For bassists, it's a klaxon that truly wonderful, robust instruments are hitting the market from all corners of the world.

Sure, the mainstays aren't going anywhere, and their name recognition will carry them forward through the decades. But why limit yourself to three or four vendors chunking out essentially the same ranges each year, save for the odd new knob here and there, when you can get the equivalent of a custom shop model from an independent luthier – for a fraction of the price?

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Spector

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The Euro RST series brings Spector's classic design into a new era with updated tonewoods, enhanced electronics, and a fresh palette of exclusive stain options.

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FLYING HIGH

Eagles bassist **Timothy B. Schmit** digs deep into his bass gear – and looks back at the days when stardom was nothing but a teenage dream

Interview: Alison Richter **Photography:** Getty

"Meat and potatoes." It's a recurring phrase during conversation with Timothy B. Schmit when discussing his technique. He loves jazz, but quickly points out that he is "not a good improviser" and "not one of those guys." He played an upright bass, inherited from his father, while recording his new solo album, *Day By Day*, but notes, "I'm a terrible standup bass player, but if you have patience as an engineer, I can make it happen." Each time, without fail, he returns to his nutritional analogy.

Meat and potatoes, however, are a dietary and music staple. Trends come and go, but meat and potatoes stay. There is always an audience, always a demand, always a palate for tasty food and tasty chops. Meat and potatoes have been featured on countless menus, just as Schmit's solid bass-lines and pristine vocals have been featured on countless recordings and live performances. It doesn't hurt that he's a genuinely nice guy, which speaks to the frequent callbacks and his decades-long post in the Eagles.

Day By Day is Schmit's seventh solo album and his first since 2016's *Leap Of Faith*. He recorded the dozen original songs at his home studio, Mooselodge, during breaks with the Eagles and a long stretch of pandemic lockdowns and cancelled tours. "This is my third album of just my own compositions, without collaborating with anybody or doing somebody else's songs," he says. "I look at it as a trilogy, these albums, because it's all just me.

"The Eagles have been busy on and off for quite a few years again," he adds, addressing the gap between his own projects. "Sometimes we take large breaks, a whole year, and sometimes we take six

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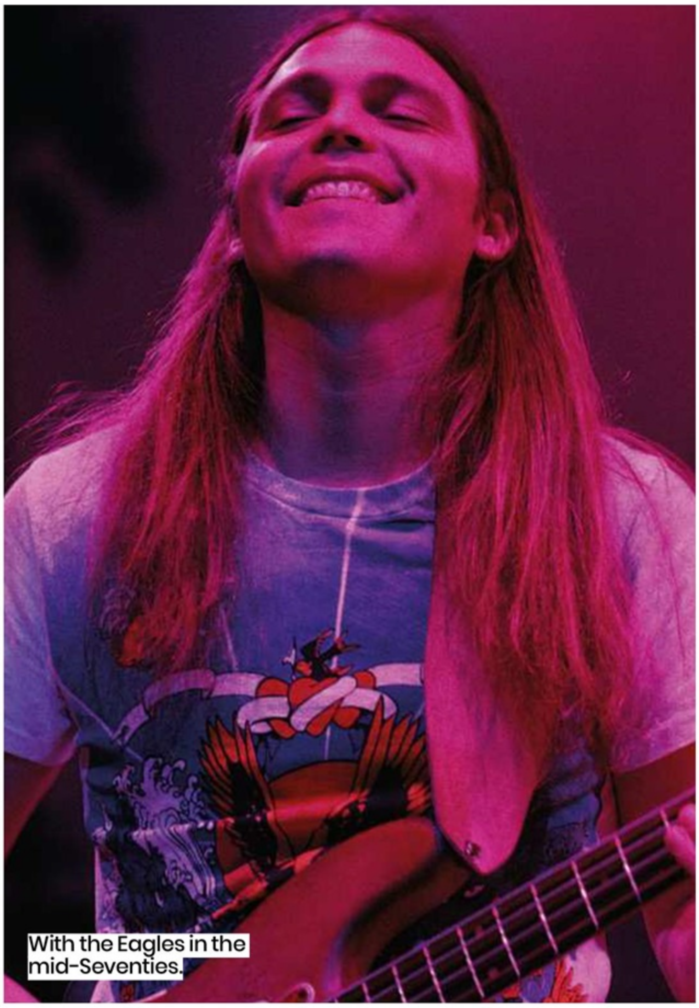

With the Eagles in the mid-Seventies.

© Brad Elterman/FilmMagic

months or three months. That's my exceptionally great job that I need and want. And what is really good for my psyche and spirit is writing songs, recording them, and producing them. Between the Eagles' stuff, I would come home, settle down, and try to write. I say 'try' because it's work for me. It's work that I enjoy, although sometimes it's incredibly frustrating to get to a point where I can't go further with a song. I persevere and then put it away for a little while and write something else. But it's a process I really love. It takes a long time because I'm busy with the Eagles, and then Covid happened. I probably wrote half of this album, and certainly recorded half of it, during that time. That's why it takes so long, and that's why there's an album now."

Schmit grew up in Sacramento, California, where he and two childhood friends formed a folk trio that they simply called Tim, Tom & Ron. By the time they graduated high school, they were enamoured with the music of the so-called British Invasion of the day, and had also graduated to electric instruments and a drummer, George (it merits note that the bandmates remain close friends and still keep in touch.) The four-piece became The Contenders, who became The New Breed, who became Glad. During their years together, they released several singles, recorded a couple of albums, and charted a Number One song on Sacramento radio that also landed in the Top 20 in San Francisco.

Early into this trajectory, at age 14 or 15, it was decided that Schmit was destined to play bass – which he did on a guitar or borrowed instruments until 1963, when he was able to afford his first Fender Precision. Through a turn of events that included selling it early on and repurchasing it decades later from its then-owner, the bass is still with him. "I used to go to the music store and stare at it on the wall, knowing that I was so far away from getting it," he says. "I did some work for my dad, babysat my infant brother for a summer, did this and that, and finally got enough money together to buy it."

The P-Bass made way for a 1963 Gibson EB-2, also still in his possession. That's the bass he brought to Poco in 1969, until he bought a candy-apple red 1964 Fender Jazz from a surfer for $175. "In my hippie dreams, the colour wasn't very cool," he says, "so I hand-sanded it, which took forever." That instrument was featured on all his recordings with Poco and on the Eagles' 1979 *The Long Run* album, his first studio project with the band, whom he joined two years prior during their *Hotel California* tour.

He added a 1961 Jazz as a backup, which came to figure prominently onstage with the Eagles. "This is a super-funky one," he says. "We call it Woody because it is a piece of wood. Somebody did a worse sanding job on it than I did on my other one. There's initials carved into it. I bought it as is, and I'm really glad I did. I play it quite a lot. Those were the only two basses I had for a while."

For a period of time in the 1990s, he played a white custom-made Carvin. "That bass was great," he says. "I used it for a long time on recordings and with the Eagles. But it was a neck-through bass, and whenever it needed tweaking... it just got to the point where it couldn't be tweaked any more. I still have it, but now it's a museum piece."

He owns some 20 or 25 basses, by his estimation, including a mid-1960s Hofner that he used on *Day By*

Alongside Don Henley in Las Vegas, 2019.

© Ethan Miller/ Getty

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The big band in 1978 (from left): Tim Schmit, Glenn Frey, Don Felder, Joe Walsh.

© David Tan/Shinko Music/Getty

Day. Mostly, though, he's a dedicated Fender man. "I have six basses onstage with the Eagles and one backup, a 1966 Jazz," he says. "A couple are a half-step down and one is a full step down. The bass my tech and I call Number One is a 1962 Jazz. It's got halfrounds on it and a great feel. I've probably had it for 10 years. That's the one I play most onstage, and I played it on my new album.

"'Woody', my '61 Jazz, has flatwounds. It's great onstage and in the studio. That's one of those basses where you instantly know it's going to sound good. You don't even have to plug it in; you play it, and you can feel it and hear it. I play a white 1964 Fender Custom Shop on three songs: 'Life In The Fast Lane', Joe (Walsh)'s 'In The City', and we do a version of the James Gang's 'Funk #49'. That bass sounds a little different, and I like that sound for those songs. I don't use that one in the studio.

"I have a black Jazz; I'm going to say it's a '62 or '63. This is an interesting-looking bass and it's got a great sound for certain songs onstage. I bought it really used. Part of the finish on the back is scraped off and you can see that it was originally sunburst. My tech thinks that someone had this bass, wanted a black one, and they just took it back in and sprayed over it.

"I have a 1965 Jazz that's in mint condition. It's got a super-thick neck, bigger than I would normally play. That's the one I tune down to D. I play it on slower songs, like 'Wasted Time' from *Hotel California*, because we do that song a whole step lower than the original. It holds the tone and sounds great.

"Don (Henley)'s 'The Boys Of Summer' requires a fretless bass. I have a Pedulla Buzz, which Jennifer Condos, one of Don's former bass players, turned me on to. Those basses sound really good. We used to do 'New York Minute', and I played it on that too, but right now I only use it for one song. I'm not really a fretless player. I can get by, but I'm not great at it, so I don't use it in the studio."

And there, once again, is the humility. For all that Timothy B. Schmit has done and all that he continues to accomplish, in many ways he remains the aspiring youngster from Sacramento. Despite becoming a multi-platinum singer, songwriter and musician in one of the industry's most enduring bands, he still considers himself a work in progress – solid, reliable, grateful, and always striving.

"I do call myself a 'meat and potatoes' bass player, but that's exactly what is called for with anything I might be doing," he says, when his affinity for the phrase is pointed out. "I don't mean to overdo 'Oh, little ol' me'. I'm just so fortunate to be able to do this. I'm not denying any talent I might have, but there are so many great players out there. I think I'm good at what I do, but 'great' is a little much for me. I just do what I do, and I'm glad that people appreciate it."

***Day By Day* is out now.**
Info: www.timothybschmit.com

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Incoming

Which bassist fell off a double bass? Which bassist never takes advice? And why do they all seem to play Squiers? Meet **Antonio Lusi**, **Bryan Webre**, **Cam Walker** and **Alex Malheiros**.

How did you get started on bass?

ANTONIO I started playing bass at 13, after listening to *Load*, the Metallica album. Jason Newsted's bass on 'King Nothing' totally kidnapped me.

BRYAN I started on guitar but never loved it: I always wanted to play drums or piano, but about five years ago, I was in a hip-hop and electronic band. We all switched around on instruments and the bass was either coming from synths or samples. I felt like the group really needed a solid bass player to make things hit harder, and to free us up for more improv live. At the same time, I found out that my favourite band around Louisiana, Lost Bayou Ramblers, needed a new bass player. I was lucky enough to get the Ramblers gig, so I became a bass player and loved it immediately.

> "As many bands will know there were complications which led to us being one bassist down. So I stepped up to the plate and decided to give it a go"
> Cam Walker

CAM I play bass and sing for the alt-pop band Love Is Enough. I started my music career singing in a metalcore band called Anatomy Of Me in the early 2000s. I've always loved singing, and never really thought about playing an instrument at the same time, but as many bands will know there were complications which led to us being one bassist down. So I stepped up to the plate and decided to give it a go. 'Why not?' I said! Ever since, I've always loved nailing down those bass-lines, locking in with the drums.

ALEX My father played double bass when I was a child. At home, I'd sit on a chair and strum the opening notes of the song 'En Un Mercado Persa', only playing the open strings at four years of age. The double bass had only three strings and was too big for me to play properly, I ended up falling to the ground along with the instrument, and unfortunately I left a mark on the body. Luckily I wasn't in too much trouble, but I think that's why my father and uncle decided to build an electric bass by copying a model from a Hollywood movie at the time, perhaps back in 1956 when they first saw an electric bass.

What was your first bass guitar?

ANTONIO My first instrument was a Roytek four-string Precision with a split-coil pickup which unfortunately I no longer have, because I swapped it a few years later for a blue Ibanez GSR 200.

BRYAN When I was thinking about picking up bass and trying to get the Ramblers gig, my good friend and room-mate at the time had an old Squier Jazz bass sitting in storage. He was going on tour, but before he left, he got it out of storage and left it for me to learn. It was the exact bass I wanted, and is the bass I use to this day.

CAM My first bass was a Squier Jazz on loan from a friend, which was a great cheapish beginner bass.

ALEX A handcrafted electric bass made by my Uncle Geraldo Malheiros in 1962. He had

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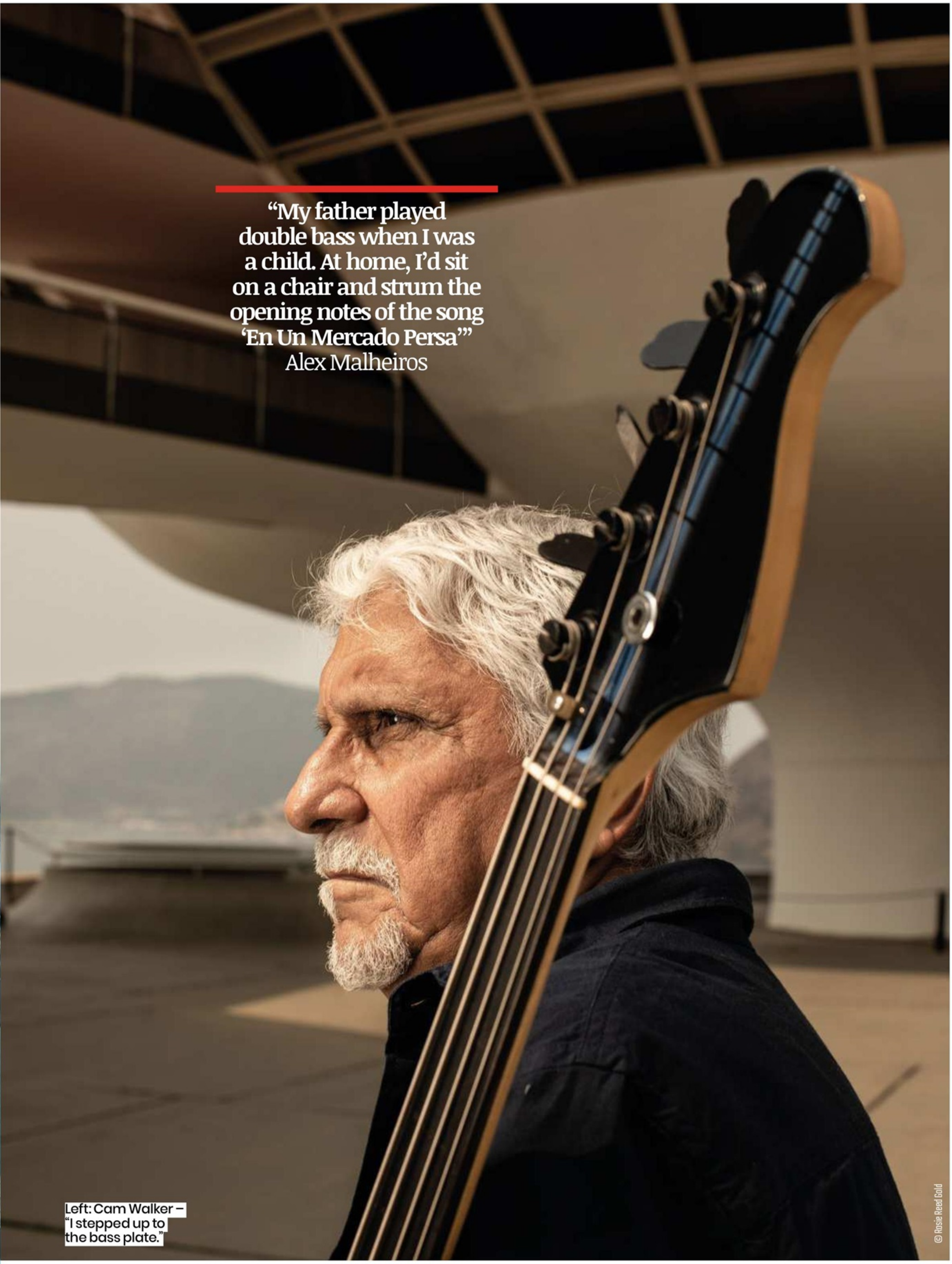

"My father played double bass when I was a child. At home, I'd sit on a chair and strum the opening notes of the song 'En Un Mercado Persa'"
Alex Malheiros

Left: Cam Walker – "I stepped up to the bass plate."

© Rosie Reed Gold

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built handmade basses in Brazil since 1957. I didn't have to start a career, I just had fun and practised with lessons from my father and uncle.

What bass gear are you using at the moment?

ANTONIO Currently I use Proamp amplifiers. I use their Z1000 head combined with several cabinets. Lately I've become fond of their 2x8 and 4x8 cabs, because they give attack and definition in the low frequencies. For basses, I use instruments by Liuteria Cesarini, an Italian artisan luthier. My bass is the Gold Bronze Version 2. For pedals, I have an Ibanez TS9B and a Darkglass BK3 V1 – I love them. I sometimes use a DBX 160A compressor live, otherwise it's an Aguilar TLC pedal. Other effects include a Boss AW-3 Dynamic Wah and an MXR Octaver Deluxe.

BRYAN I only own the original Squier bass my friend left for me. I put flatwounds on it, though. It's funny to me how good it sounds. I get asked specifically in studio sessions for my tone – and it's just my fingers, the Squier Jazz, and flatwounds. I turn the bridge pickup off to get more of a P-Bass sound, and I use a pick sometimes too. I like to experiment with pedals and things in the studio, but live it's pretty simple. For the Lost Bayou Ramblers and Michot's Melody Makers, it's a huge fuzz tone almost the entire time. Fuzz can be a tricky tone live, especially using different backline amps, so most of my pedals are used to dial it in. I also use an old original Russian Big Muff that was given to me, and which is incredible. I put it in a loop through a Boss line selector pedal so I can mix in a clean bass tone with the fuzz and get a bit more clarity and solid low end. The Loop is a fuzz, Boss EQ pedal, and a noise gate in order to get a more solid, punchy fuzz tone,

> **"I still receive some very useful tips. I'll tell you the advice I would like to have received as a kid: count with awareness."**
> Alex Lusi

Antonio Lusi: "Jason Newsted's bass kidnapped me."

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Bryan Webre: "Favourite bassist? That's an impossible question to answer."

instead of a wild, out-of-control fuzz.
CAM In the studio recently, while tracking bass for Love Is Enough's debut album, I ended up swapping between a real nice 1970s Fender J-Bass and a super-sweet Sadowsky MetroLine J-Bass, paired with an old Fender Bassman and Orange 8x10 setup. They were so nice to play and always give a really solid warm sound. Live I run a different rig, using a Warwick Streamer with a Line6 Helix Stomp for our IEM setup.
ALEX In my home studio I have an Ashdown B-120 amp with a Boss Harmonist PS-6, a Boss Super Octave OC-3 and a Zoom B1X. I play basses by Ibanez, Squier and Epiphone, and I have Di Author and Tajima fretless basses.

What's the best advice you've ever been given about bass?

> "I only own the original Squier bass my friend left for me. I put flatwounds on it, though. It's funny to me how good it sounds"
> Bryan Webre

ANTONIO I've received a lot of useful advice on how to play bass, and I still receive some very useful tips. I'll tell you the advice I would like to have received as a kid: count with awareness.
BRYAN Honestly, I've never been given any, since I never took lessons or anything. I learned on the job, playing gigs.
CAM I always remember the great advice and memorable words from Pete Lucas, the bass player from the Troggs and a good friend: turn the bass up, play it hard and look good while doing it. A great bit of friendly advice.
ALEX My uncle told me not to copy anyone else's way of playing but to be myself and find my own style. I think this helped me to stand out, with a simple but very personal sound, with a striking personality, and perhaps a little dramatic, too.

Which bass player do you most admire?

ANTONIO The bassist I most follow is Marcus Miller. I love him for his ideas as a composer and arranger, and obviously I love his sound and his superlative technique.
BRYAN This is an impossible question to answer. There's a ton, including a bunch that I don't know the names of because they're on old Brazilian and Latin records that aren't credited, but are incredible. Everyone from Charles Mingus, Jimmy Garrison, Cachaito, Carol Kaye, James Jamerson, to modern players like Pino Palladino, Derrick Hodge, Mononeon, Thundercat, and a ton of Latin players.
CAM I guess you can't get much more iconic from a vocalist and bass player point of view than Sting. As a more modern player, Nate Mendel from the Foo Fighters has become a bit of an icon to me: his tight rhythm style of playing, driving the songs, is really my style of playing.
ALEX Scott LaFaro, because in my adolescence, he pushed me into different paths from other bass players at that time. His very expressive sound helped me to try to achieve good timbres on the acoustic bass – and why not on the electric too?

Where can we hear you play?

ANTONIO You can listen to my two albums, *Seven* and *Luna Ci Vediamo Domani*, and my new singles, 'Once Upon A Time' and 'Guest In Peace', which will be on my new album, to be released in September.
BRYAN I play with a number of groups – Lost Bayou Ramblers, Michot's Melody Makers, Shakespeare & The Blues, Soul Creole, and others around South Louisiana.
CAM Our debut single 'Burn' is out and our second single 'Stay' will be released soon. We will be playing a ton of shows over the summer.
ALEX On my solo records, including my forthcoming album *Tempos Futuros*, as well as in concert with Azymuth, on tours through Europe and Brazil.

ANTONIO www.lusiillupo.com
BRYAN @bryanwebre
CAM www.loveisenoughband.com
ALEX facebook.com/alexmalheiros

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GEAR Reviews

Welcome to our expert road-tests of state-of-the-art bass gear

Behold our world-beating bass gear review section, where we bring you the crop of each month's new, interesting or otherwise relevant bass guitars, bass amplifiers, bass cabs and bass effects. Occasionally we'll review a guitar effect if it's useful for bassists, but generally speaking, this zone is reserved for bass-specific gear.

We take our reviews seriously. *BP* is the last English-language print magazine devoted solely to bass in the world, and we have readers all over the planet, so we're responsible about our conclusions. If a product is worth your time, we'll say so; if it's flawed, we'll make that clear. We're not answerable to advertisers in any way, and our tests are independent of the views of musicians, manufacturers and distributors.

Let us know what you think of our conclusions. Did we get it right?

Joel McIver, Editor

Reviewed this month...

48
SQUIER
40TH ANNIVERSARY VINTAGE PRECISION AND JAZZ
£499, www.fender.com

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TRACE ELLIOT
TE-1200
£1025, www.bandm.co.uk

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SQUIER

40th Anniversary Vintage Precision and Jazz

Happy 40th anniversary, Squier! What better way to celebrate than with some new basses, says Kevin Sanders

FENDER
www.fender.com

£499

At the dawn of rock and roll, if you wanted a bass guitar, you had to buy a Fender. There wasn't really any other choice. Leo Fender had been first out of the blocks back in 1951, and the brilliance of his design meant that no-one else seriously competed for years. By the start of the Eighties, however, dark clouds were gathering over Fender after a perceived decline in quality following the sale of the brand to CBS. Even more seriously, a couple of Japanese companies – most notably Tokai – started producing inexpensive but accurate copies of Fender's guitars and basses from the pre-CBS glory days.

Something needed to be done, so Fender brought in a new management team, who decided that the only way to deal with this problem was to produce their own high-quality but inexpensive guitars and basses. They would manufacture them in Japan, where production costs and skilled labour were lower, and they would market them under the Squier name, a company that Fender had acquired back in the Sixties.

The strategy worked, and although Fender were now in effect competing with themselves, the Squier range of guitars and basses has been in constant production ever since. All that was 40 years ago, and to mark the occasion, Squier have released Gold Editions of these very special – but as ever, affordable – P and J basses.

Build Quality

The construction and materials are similar for both the Precision and the Jazz, so let's start there. The first thing to notice is that the bodies of these basses are made from Nyatoh, a trade name for a number of species of softer nato wood. It's a good choice, as it's inexpensive, fairly sustainable and grows locally in Indonesia, where these basses are made. Having said that, I'm not entirely sure why Fender didn't opt for using poplar, a tonewood used on many of their early basses that has a beautifully warm but focused tone. They use it on several other guitars in the Squier range, even on cheaper instruments – so why not on these? It can only be down to economics.

Talking of which, the fretboard on both the Jazz and Precision is Indian laurel. No complaints there: it's a dark chocolate brown and is almost indistinguishable from rosewood. The maple used for the necks looks good too, with just a few flecks of colour and grain irregularities to distinguish it from the flawless timber used for the most expensive Fender basses.

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FENDER
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The machining tolerances are as you'd expect for modern, factory-produced instruments, with tight neck pockets and tidy routing for the truss rod channel and under the pickguards. Overall the paint and neck lacquer finish on both basses is expert: perhaps it's a little too glossy on the back of the neck for my own taste, but it has been evenly applied and polished back.

For me, the gold hardware works better on the Jazz than the Precision. I've always felt that there's something enjoyably workmanlike about a Precision bass, and I'd prefer it with chrome or better still, nickel hardware. On the other hand, the gold hardware on the Jazz gives the bass a whiff of custom extravagance, especially on the white bass that we have here. Similarly, I'd prefer to see dots rather than block fret board inlays on the Precision, although I have to admit that the pearloid blocks are perfectly inlaid and do look good on both.

The Precision is loud and proud, and in a straight fight with my 20-year-old Fender P, easily holds its own

The back of the headstock proudly states 'Crafted in Indonesia', and they're right to be proud. The construction, materials and finish are excellent.

Sounds And Playability

It's almost impossible to plug in and play these basses for the first time without a whole range of preconceptions and expectations. To analyse them as objectively as I can, I'll start with the Squier Precision and compare it with two other P-Basses – an original '64 and a more recent early-2000s model.

Before that, though, I need to give the truss rod a bit of a tweak, as the neck needs a little more relief to prevent buzzing from the new strings. I'm guessing the bass didn't leave the factory like this and has probably moved slightly in transit. That done, and the action adjusted, it plays like a dream. The C-profile neck is about 3mm narrower at the

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TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

SQUIER 40TH ANNIVERSARY VINTAGE PRECISION (JAZZ)

Price | £499
Made In | Indonesia
Body | Nyatoh
Neck | Maple, 34" scale
Neck Join | Bolt-on
Nut Width | 43mm (38mm)
Fingerboard | Indian Laurel
Frets | 20 tall narrow
Pickups | 1 x Alnico split single-coil (2 x single coil)
Electronics | Passive
Controls | Volume, tone (front pickup volume, bridge pickup volume, tone)
Hardware | Fender, gold-plated
Weight | 3.8kg (4.2kg) / 8.4 lbs (9.3 lbs)
Left-hand available? No
Case/gigbag supplied? No

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Fabulous looks, refined, powerful sounds
Minus | Alder rather than Nyatoh bodies would have been preferable; these basses are expensive for Squiers
Overall | A fitting tribute to the Squier brand's amazing success

BP RATING (PRECISION)

BUILD QUALITY
SOUND QUALITY
VALUE

BP RATING (JAZZ)

BUILD QUALITY
SOUND QUALITY
VALUE

FENDER
www.fender.com

nut than my older Fender P, but it's super-comfortable and fast to play, helped no doubt by the high standard of fret finishing and edge binding.

If I had to use one word to describe the sound of the Squier Precision, it would be 'authentic'. It's loud and proud, and in a straight fight with my 20-year-old Fender P, easily holds its own, with even more of a snarling clang to the top end. Very impressive.

The Squier Jazz feels substantially weightier than the Precision – in fact, it's exactly a pound heavier. It feels and looks like a high-quality instrument, and it sounds great too: the two tone controls are smooth to use and work with a predictable, even effect on the pickup sound. All the classic Jazz bass tones are present and correct, with a particularly impressive, zingy top end which will make this a slapper's dream.

It's perhaps a tiny bit light on the very low end, but this may well be down to the relatively higher density of the body timber on this particular bass. Overall, though, it sounds great and exceeds expectations for a Jazz bass at this kind of price.

Conclusion

The big question here is 'Are these basses as good as their Fender counterparts – and if so, is there any point in spending at least twice as much on the original?'

For the first part, I'd have to say no – but only just. It's a close call, but the quality of materials and hardware aren't quite up to the very high standards of Fender's finest. As for the second part of the question, the answer to that is much more nuanced. After all, buying a Precision or Jazz with the Fender name on the headstock is often an aspirational, emotive process. Jaco played a Fender, Jamerson played a Fender – but can you name a classic bass-line that was recorded on a Squier? Neither can I.

Still, these things matter more to some people than others – and if history and legacy aren't your priorities, then congratulations! You can buy a great bass at a fraction of the cost of its Fender equivalent.

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TEAM TALK

We ask Brandon Schmidt, Squier's Senior Product Manager, the elephant-in-the-room question: should we buy a Squier or a Fender?

"Bass is really my first love," says Brandon Schmidt when we catch up on a video call – and as we talk, I notice an old Precision bass hanging on the wall behind him. Squier's head honcho is speaking to *BP* today from his home in Hollywood, just a few miles from his office – but a long way from his origins, he tells us. "I was originally from North Dakota, and I moved to California to study bass at CalArts. It was a great time to be there – I had some lessons with Charlie Haden and Alphonso Johnson."

After finishing college, Schmidt went to work at Guitar Center, primarily as a way of meeting potential bass students for his teaching work. During his time there, he discovered a passion for the instruments he was selling, and soon after he moved to a role in customer service and product development with Cordoba Music Group, which had recently bought Guild Guitars from Fender. He stayed with Cordoba for five years before moving to Fender.

I want to understand the process of producing these new Squier basses, and how they fit into the wider Fender catalogue, so I begin by asking Schmidt whether there was much input from bass players. "The product development team for Squier and for Fender literally share the same office," he tells me. "I actually sit opposite the product manager for Fender, so we're all sharing ideas and getting input from players on a daily basis."

This brings us to the point that I'm most keen to ask him about. I suggest that Squier basses are now so good that they must surely be taking some customers away from Fender. "Of course, this is something we're always tracking," he acknowledges. "In reality, our engineering and R&D teams will pull a lot of information from Fender US. We might use a neck drawing or a body design from a previous generation of Fender product and have that produced in South East Asia, so there's a direct correlation between the two."

Why should a new or younger player spend double the price of one of these Squier basses on a Fender, when the quality and sound of both are so close? "When you get into Fender, you get the next level of materials and workmanship. There's also more time given to fit and finish in Fender's own workshops," he explains. "When we have basses manufactured in China or Indonesia, we're kind of at the mercy of their capabilities, although I think it's testament to them and the teams from Fender who are constantly monitoring quality and processes, that the Squier basses produced are of such high quality."

I ask if Squier and Fender ever share hardware or electronics, to which he replies: "Only in so much as they might come from the same supplier, but the parts used in Squier will be a more cost-effective choice as opposed to the higher quality and spec used on the Fenders. Things like tuning machines might be of a slightly lower quality, but that's just something we need to do to meet our price points."

I also want to know why nyatoh has been chosen for the bodies of these two basses rather than the more traditional alder. "The answer to that is two-fold," says Schmidt. "Firstly cost, and secondly supply. Nato grows locally to the factory where the Squier 40th Anniversary basses are made, so there's less cost for transport. I also want to keep a clear delineation between our products and the Fender range. We need to make sure that players will want to upgrade later."

With that in mind, I asked how, given the constraints of cost, he manages to get some of the features of the 40th Anniversary basses to production – my favourite being the gold aluminium pickguards. "Year by year we're getting into higher specs and price points with Squier basses, and these 40th Anniversary basses are an example of that. We're getting permission from the market, through proving our quality level, to live at those higher price points."

And what of the future, I ask? Schmidt is realistic but upbeat. "No-one really knows what the future holds, but Squier can certainly drive the market rather than just react to it. People are increasingly learning on their own rather than having formal lessons. This was the whole thinking behind Fender Play, which we created five or six years ago as an online teaching experience which fits perfectly with this new way of learning guitar and bass. With things like this, I think we can maintain a certain level of growth – and I think Squier is uniquely positioned to stay in front of the market while doing so."

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TRACE ELLIOT TE-1200

BARNES & MULLINS
www.bandm.co.uk

£1025

Bryan R. Tyler tests the new powerhouse amp from Trace Elliot. Stand clear...

Trace Elliot has been synonymous with high-end bass amplification for decades, used by bass luminaries such as Mark King and John Entwistle. My own first issue of *Bass Player* had a glowing review of a Trace amp way back in 1996. Their resurgence in recent years has been thanks to their ELF micro series of ultra-light amps and cabinets, and with the TE-1200 they've made a return to concert-level power while staying focused on portablility.

The TE-1200 is impressive straight out of the box. The unit feels dense, and the rack handles on the face and unique side panels set it apart visually from many of the other amps in this category. The backlit knobs are evenly spaced and turn smoothly with center detents on the EQ controls, clearly designed to make hassle-free changes mid-gig, and the rear panel boasts all the output options you could ask for, including MIDI in and out and a USB out for recording.

Small yet extremely solid, it won't slide even at high volume, and the substantial feet are designed to interlock with the new line of Trace Pro cabinets. This isn't a micro amp: at 11.5 pounds (5.2 kilos) it's not meant to slide into your gigbag. What it is is a very compact, full-featured bass amplifier. The TE-1200 is rated at 1200 watts continuous RMS, meaning you'll get consistent, high power output which, when

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TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Price | £1025
Made in | China
Power | 1200 watts RMS
Features | 4-ohm minimum load, worldwide AC voltage selector
Front panel | Built-in Lo/Hi-Band compressors with defeat switch (footswitchable), pre-shape switch (footswitchable), 4-band equalisation, EQ Pre/Post compressor switch, mute/tune switch (footswitchable) input gain and output level controls, headphone jack
Rear panel | Pre and post balanced XLR outputs with ground lift, noiseless buffered effects loop with level switch (footswitchable), preamp output/power amp input 1V RMS master/slave loop, buffered tuner/dry feed jack, MIDI In and Out, USB recording output interface, dual Neutrik combination Speakon/phone speaker output jacks. A four-button MIDI footswitch with 25-foot cable, padded gigbag, and optional 1.5U rackmount kit included
Weight | 11.5 lbs / 5.2 kg

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Huge power, clean tone, compact
Minus | Somewhat limited EQ
Overall | A great-sounding amp that can handle any venue size with ease

BP RATING

BUILD QUALITY
10/10
SOUND QUALITY
9/10
VALUE
9/10

coupled with the right cabinets, should cover any size venue you can play. An included footswitch lets you toggle several of the amp's features (pre-shape, compressor, mute, effects loop), and Trace also includes both a bag and rack ears to fit your preferred amp setup.

The amp is dead silent, and even at high volume there's no hiss. This also means you can play or practise at low volume with no issues. Small enough to easily fit on top of a 1x12, the TE-1200 is equally at home at a coffee shop gig as it is on a large stage – just be careful not to overpower your lower-wattage cabs.

The flat tone is beautiful: clean and articulate with enough warmth to keep it from sounding sterile or too hi-fi. The EQ section is simple but effective, with a four-band equaliser, a two-band compressor, and a pre-shape switch. The compressor works well: its effects are noticeable without being heavy-handed, and an optional button allows you to compress pre or post EQ. I generally don't use compression live, but found myself really enjoying using a subtle to moderate amount of pre-EQ compression, as it stayed musical and didn't alter the tone.

The pre-shape engages an EQ curve designed to bring out some of the classic Trace sound, and does just that by boosting the lows and highs with a slight mid cut at particular frequencies to bring out a setting that sounds scooped but not hollow. It can be used to make a tight slap tone that should cut through any mix, but also works great when using a more aggressive fingerstyle for heavier music.

While the simplified EQ is reminiscent of the concert heads of old, this could be a sticking point for knob-tweakers who want more detailed control of their EQ points or multiple channels to switch between. This is an amp that you bring your tone to, rather than using it to completely colour your tone. That's not to say the controls are lacking, as the frequency points of the EQ boosts/cuts are great and you can dial in punchy slap tones to mid-focused fingerstyle, all with immediate responsiveness.

It should go without saying, but this amp gets loud. After all, 1200 watts into a 4-ohm load will be more than enough output for most, and the amp still pumps out a considerable amount of power into a single 8-ohm speaker at over 800 watts. The amp stays clean throughout at any volume setting, never breaking up or faltering.

The gain knob is meant to adjust for your instrument's output alone, not double as an overdrive. There's no attempt at tube emulation or settings for a gritty sound, so if these are features that you need in an amp, you're better off elsewhere. What the clarity does, however, is allow you to get the most out of any effects you put in front of it. Everything from distortion to multitap delays sound great through it, without having to repeatedly adjust the amp to resolve EQ conflicts.

The TE-1200 is a welcome addition to the new Trace Elliot line-up. They've taken the advances in lightweight tech they first applied to the ELF line and used them to make a compact yet impressively powerful new amp. We recommend it.

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Bass Lessons

Making you a better bass player in every issue, our state-of-the-art team of educators will guide you every step of the way. Say hello to them here!

I SPY... 60

RYAN MADORA

Dig into your favourite bass parts... and discover treasure!
Ryan Madora is one of Nashville's most sought-after touring and session bassists. Recent touring and session credits include Robben Ford, Kyshona Armstrong, and her instrumental trio, The Interludes. For the past five years, she has served as musical director for Bobby Bones and has played with Garth Brooks, Darius Rucker, and Carrie Underwood. In addition to instructing at Nashville's campus of Musician's Institute, Ryan has taught at Gerald Veasley's Bass Boot Camp, Rock'n'Roll Fantasy Camp, and at universities across the USA. She has contributed columns to No Treble for over a decade and in 2019, published her first book, *Bass Players To Know: Learning From The Greats*. Ryan offers online education at TrueFire and her website.
www.ryanmadora.com
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BEGINNER 64

STEVE LAWSON

Kickstart your journey to the top of the bass world here
Steve Lawson is the UK's most celebrated solo bass guitarist. Across more than two decades of touring, and a huge catalogue of solo and collaborative albums, he's built up a worldwide audience for his looping and processing approach to bass sound. Recent collaborators include Beardyman, Reeves Gabrels, Andy Gangadeen, Tanya Donelly, Divinity Roxx and Jonas Hellborg. He been teaching bass for almost three decades, and lectures at universities and colleges across the globe. Victor Wooten once commented, 'Steve Lawson is a brilliant musician. I've known about him and listened to him for many years. He may not be one of the most famous bassists – but he is definitely one of the most talented'. Who are we to argue?
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INTERMEDIATE 70

PHILIP MANN

Now you're rolling, it's time to hit the next level
Philip Mann studied at the London College of Music, securing bachelor's and master's degrees in performance before receiving a scholarship to study under Jeff Berlin at the Players School of Music in Florida. Endorsed by Overwater and Eich, he's a busy, internationally freelancing electric and double bassist. His performance and session credits include work with Grammy Award-winning artists Van Morrison and Albert Lee, five-time Grammy Award nominee Hunter Hayes, Deep Purple's Steve Morse, Leo Sayer, Billy Bragg and country artist Peter Donegan. Author of the *Chord Tone Concepts* texts, Philip is currently a member of the visiting faculty at the Players School while simultaneously lecturing for Scott's Bass Lessons.
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ADVANCED 76

RICH BROWN

Maximise your bass skills with our advanced studies
Toronto-born electric bassist Rich Brown has established himself as an incredibly versatile artist. Along with being one of the most called-upon electric bass players in Canada, Rich is a composer, producer, bandleader, educator and clinician, broadcaster, and voiceover artist. He has recorded three albums as a leader, including his critically acclaimed album of solo bass compositions *Between Heaviness & Here*.
Rich appears on a plethora of recordings, ranging from jazz to traditional Arabic and Asian music. He has performed with a wide variety of artists, including Rudresh Mahanthappa, Vijay Iyer, Steve Coleman and Angelique Kidjo. Rich leads two groups – rinsethealgorithm and The Abeng – and was nominated for a Juno Award in 2016 for his latest album, *Abeng*.
fbass.com/artists/rich-brown
Instagram richbrownbass
Youtube Brown'stone With Rich Brown

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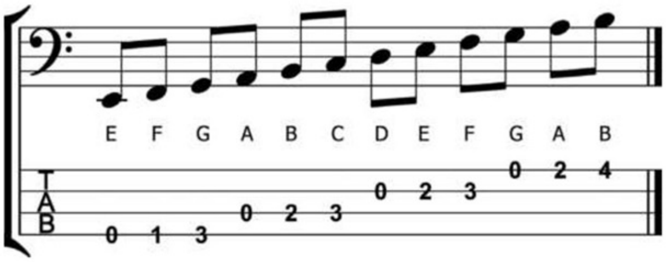
BP Notation Legend

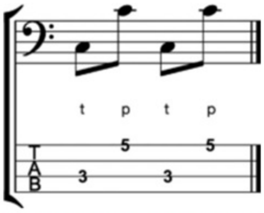
The following is a guide to the notation symbols and terminology used in *Bass Player* magazine

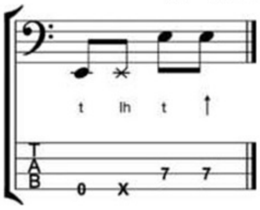
The Stave: Most music written for the bass guitar uses the bass clef. The example to the right shows the placement of the notes on the stave.

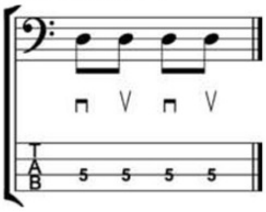
Tablature: This is a graphical representation of the music. Each horizontal line corresponds with a string on the bass guitar, with the lowest line representing the lowest pitched string (E). The numbers represent the frets to be played. Numbers stacked vertically indicate notes that are played together. Where basses with five or six strings are required, the tablature stave will have five or six lines as necessary.

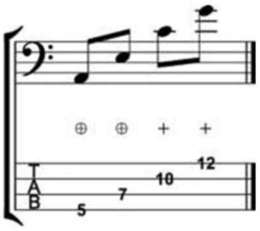


PLAYING TECHNIQUES









SLAP AND POP TECHNIQUE

Notes slapped with the thumb are marked with a 't', notes popped with the fingers marked with a 'p'.

ADVANCED SLAP TECHNIQUE

Fretting hand slaps are marked 'lh' and double thumbing upstrokes are shown with an upward pointing arrow.

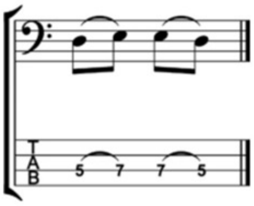
PLECTRUM TECHNIQUE

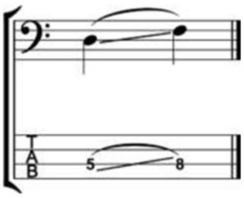
Where necessary, down and upstrokes with the pick will be shown using these symbols (down-up-down-up).

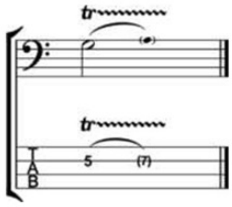
TAPPING TECHNIQUES

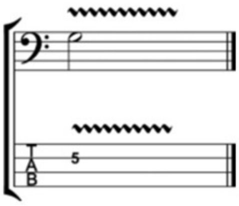
Fretting hand taps have a '+' in a circle. Picking hand taps are just '+'. Particular fingers may be shown with numbers.

FRETTING TECHNIQUES









HAMMER-ON AND PULL-OFF

These are shown with a slur over the notes. Only the first note is plucked by the picking hand.

SLIDE (GLISSANDO)

Slides are performed by playing the first note and then sliding the fretting finger up to the second note.

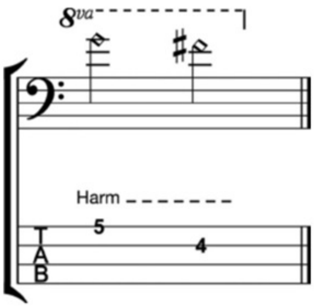
TRILLS

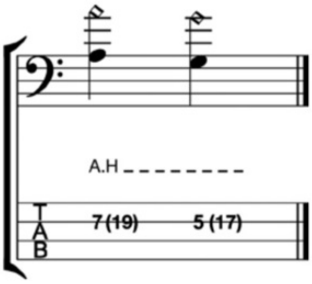
Trills are performed by rapidly alternating between the two notes shown, using hammer-ons and pull-offs.

VIBRATO

The pitch of the note is altered by repeatedly bending the string up and back with the fretting finger.

PLAYING HARMONICS





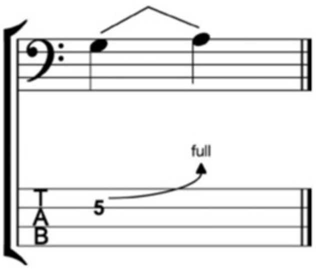
NATURAL HARMONICS

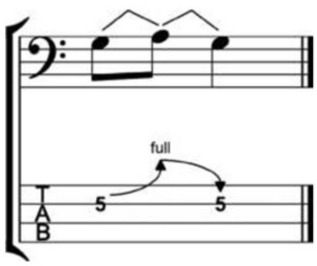
The note is played as a harmonic by lightly touching the string above the fret indicated.

ARTIFICIAL HARMONICS

Pluck while fretting the lower note and touching the edge of the picking hand thumb to the note in brackets.

BENDING NOTES





BEND

The note is bent upwards to the interval specified: ½ indicates a semitone, 'full' indicates a tone.

BEND AND RELEASE

The note is bent up to the interval indicated and then released back to its original pitch.

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I SPY...

WHAT'S A HALF-STEP BETWEEN FRIENDS?

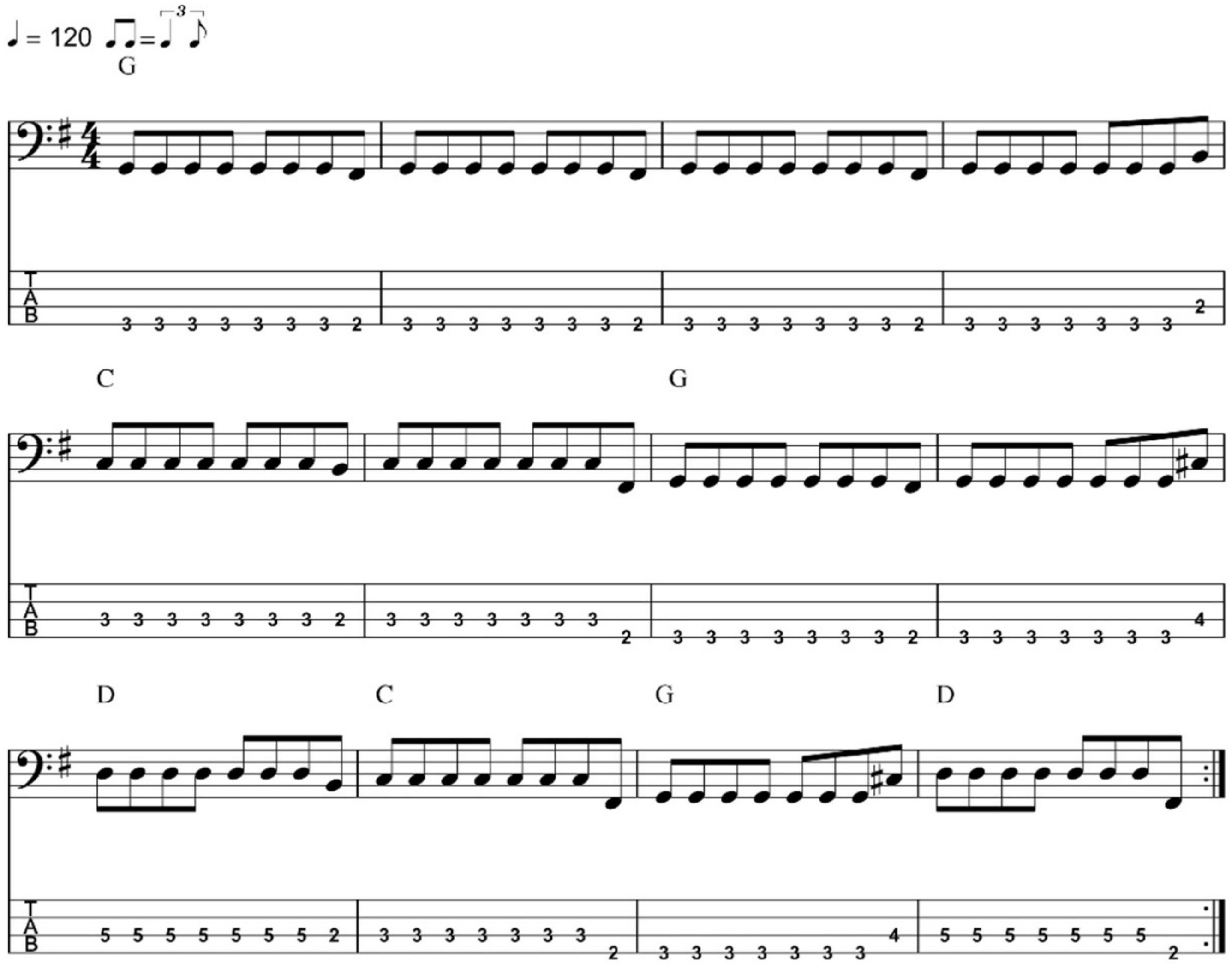
In session and stage bassist Ryan Madora's amazing new column, we discover a stack of useful secrets hidden inside our favourite bass-lines

Hey there, bass players! As we explore various patterns and shapes on the fretboard, we may find ourselves sticking to safe-sounding notes. That's why we learn octaves, chord shapes, and pentatonic scales. They provide us with a clear-cut road map of consonance: thirds, fifths, major sixths, minor sevenths and so on. These notes tend to be considered correct by theory standards and help us colour between the lines – but what if we'd like to add a dash of hot sauce to our burrito, a sprinkle of malt vinegar to our fish and chips, or a drizzle of chili oil atop our pizza? The addition of sour or spicy can heighten the flavours of a dish and provide welcome contrast. Certain note choices, and our willingness to add a bit of dissonance, can do the same.

When we mention dissonance, we're typically referring to notes that 'rub' or create tension. They may not be the obvious choice and in fact, often live outside a particular chord or scale that we're accustomed to using. The dissonant intervals tend to be either very far away (such a tritone) or very nearby (a semitone, or half-step). In this column, we're going to focus on our next-door neighbours and explore the delightful dissonance of a half-step.

As we dig in, think about the major scale. Sing it to yourself or play it on your instrument. As you ascend the scale going

EXERCISE ONE



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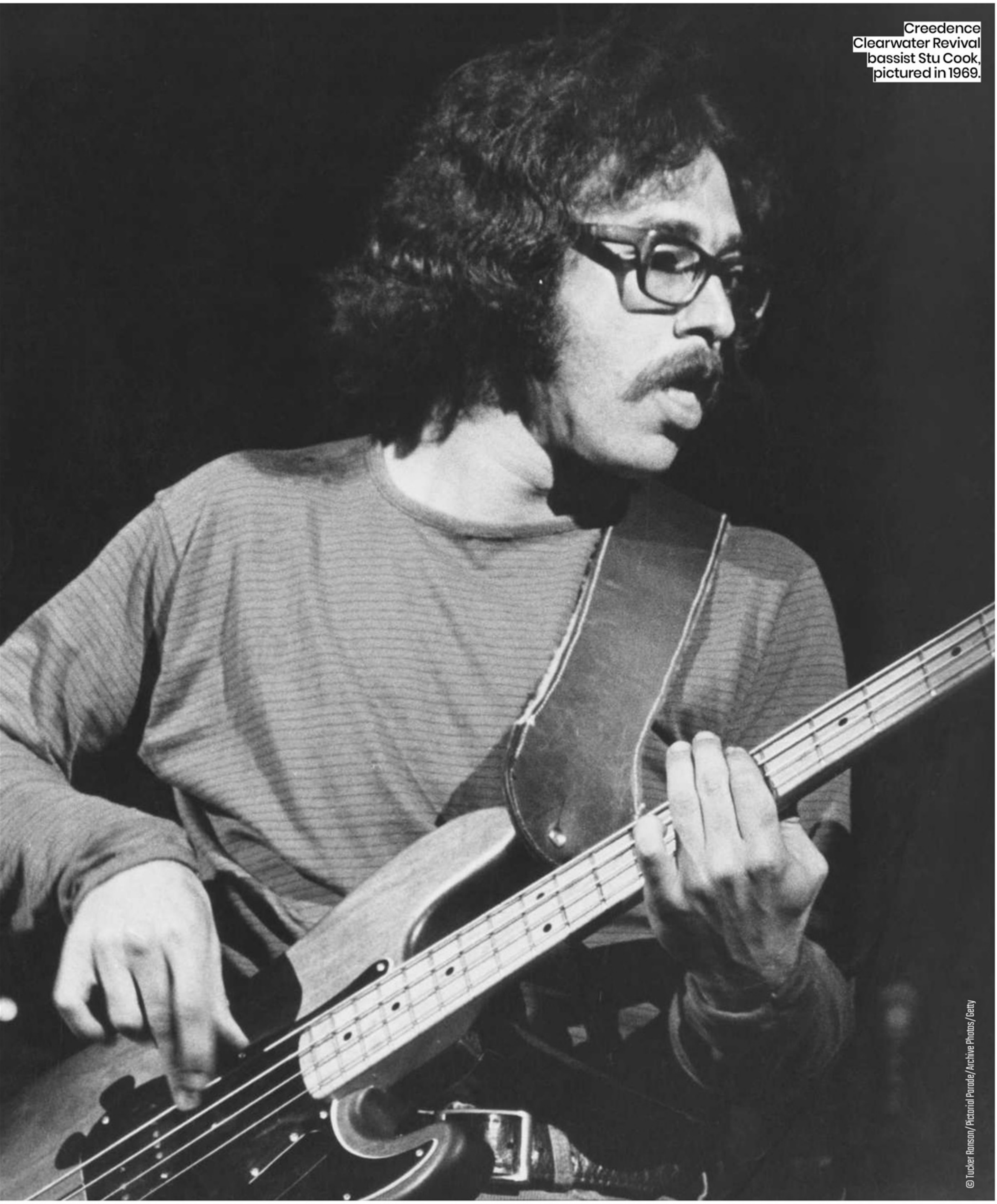

Creedence Clearwater Revival bassist Stu Cook, pictured in 1969.

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'Do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti,' stop on the seventh scale degree. Do not – I repeat, do not – land on 'do'. At this moment, your inner monologue should cry out, 'Hey, we're not finished yet, there's one more note that we need to play!' You've ascended the scale and landed on a note that creates tension. The seventh scale degree is pulling strongly to the final note, the octave. It desperately wants to land and find resolution.

Okay, you've been waiting long enough. You can land on 'do' and resolve the scale. That simple movement of a half-step will make everything better. As you do this, recognise how a fairly dissonant note (the major seventh) is used to approach a consonant note (the octave). It perfectly exemplifies half-step dissonance, the power of approach notes, and the beloved concept of tension and resolution.

While this is easy to understand in the context of a major scale, let's apply it to another musical scenario, the 12-bar blues. Rather than playing a walking line or a box pattern, we'll hang on the root note and 'bump' along with the shuffle groove. Despite its simplicity, playing the root note (and only the root note) can sound a bit stale. The good news is that we can effortlessly add some interest and authenticity with the help of half-steps.

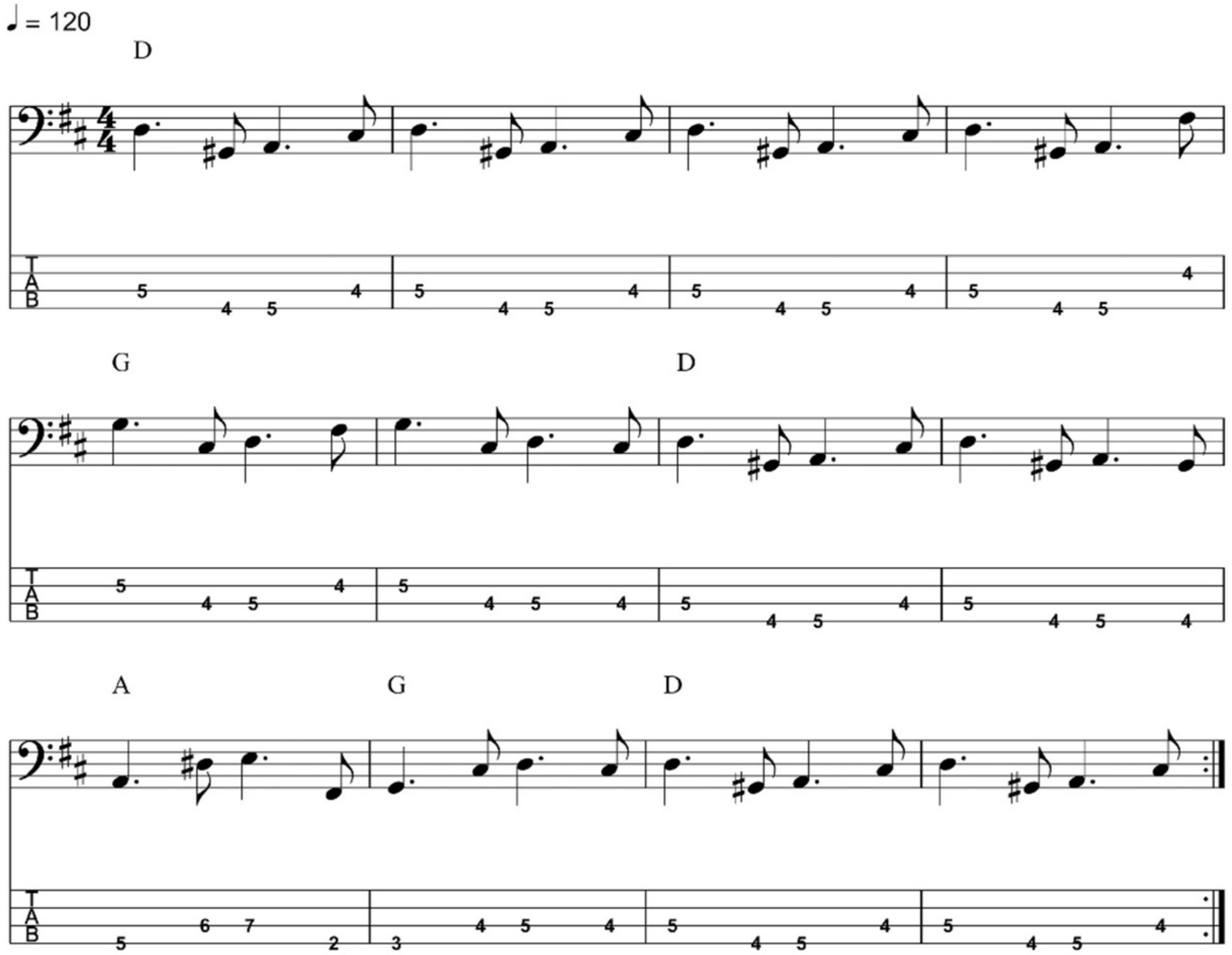
In **Exercise 1**, approach root notes from the half-step below. We'll play a standard 12-bar blues in the key of G, moving through the 'I-IV-V' chord progression (G, C, and D, respectively). Play swung eighth notes on the root and include the approach note on the 'and-of-four'. Play F# just before hitting G, B before hitting C, and C# before hitting D. This breaks up the pattern and places emphasis on the next downbeat (beat one of the following bar). Even though it's a simple addition, it's incredibly effective at setting up the one, much like using 'ti' before landing on 'do'.

Certain note choices and dissonance can provide a welcome contrast

This method is great for approaching the root notes, but it can also be applied to a root-fifth style bass part. Commonly used in country, rock, and pop, we can add some extra swagger by approaching both the root and the fifth by a half-step. This happens to tie in nicely with last month's lesson, so you may want to revisit those exercises.

In the meantime, let's apply this concept in **Exercise 2** by moving to the key of D and playing another 12-bar blues progression. This time, our I-IV-V will be D, G, and A, respectively. In a typical root-fifth part, we can play the root on beat one, followed by the fifth of the chord on beat three. To add some

EXERCISE TWO



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Sabrina Carpenter performs on ABC's *Good Morning America* in 2019.

dissonance, we're going to approach the fifth from a half-step below. This will technically use the tritone or #4th of the key on the 'and-of-two'. As you return to the root, approach it from a half-step below on the 'and-of-four'. Apply this concept across all chords in the progression.

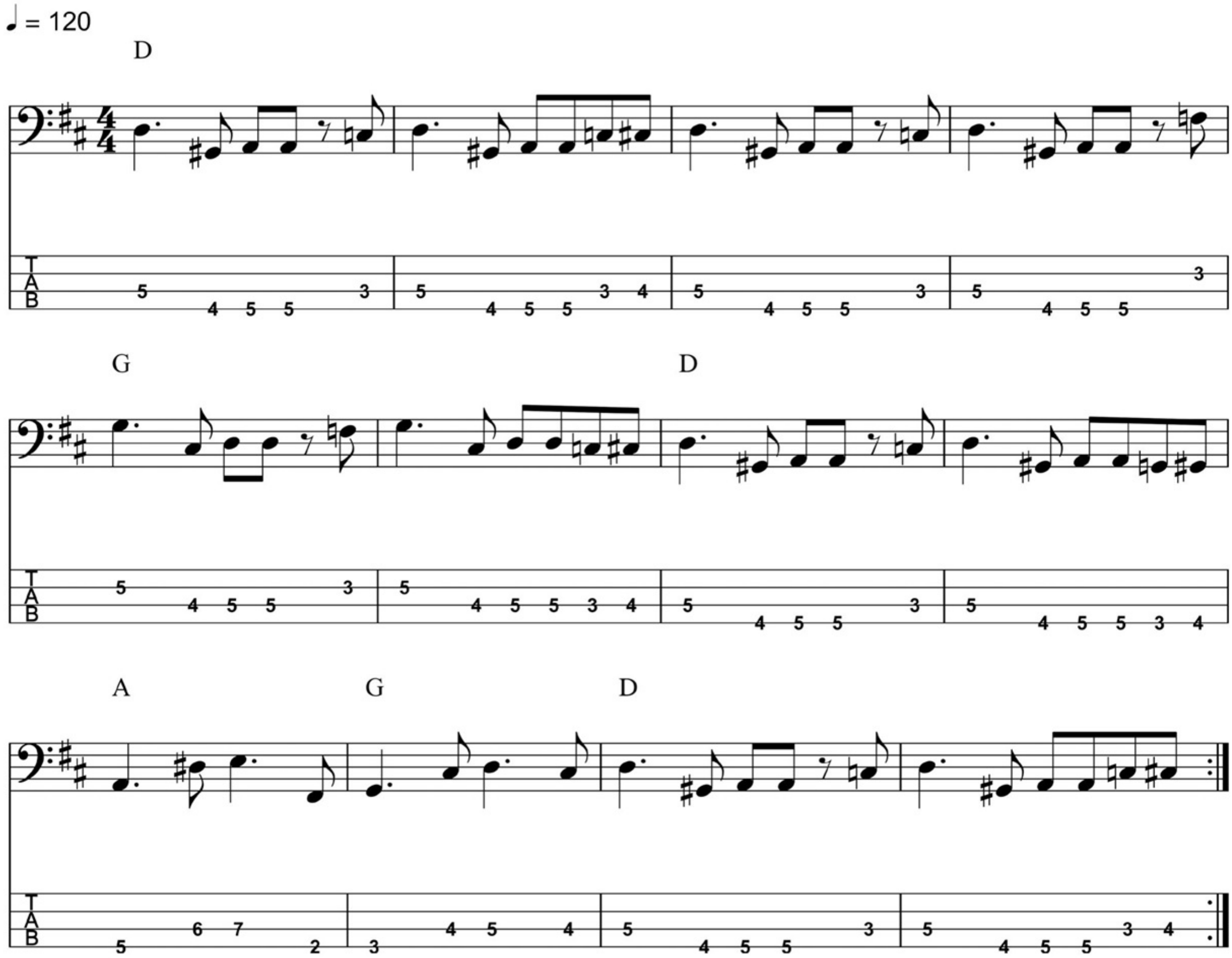
To hear this in action, I urge you to take a listen to B.B. King's hit 'The Thrill Is Gone'. Even though the song is in a minor key, Jerry Jemmott holds down the low end and approaches the root and the fifth of the chord by a half-step. These notes aren't technically in the minor scale, but they certainly enhance the emotional delivery of B.B.'s guitar.

While the blues seems like an obvious place for dissonance, the same method can be used in a jovial and lighthearted context as well. The 1975 pop classic, 'Love Will Keep Us Together' by Captain & Tennille does just that. The signature riffs of the song, as well as the bass-line, rely on the half-step approach to both the root and the fifth, just as we practised in Exercise 2.

To take this concept a step further, we can alternate between using the half-step below the root (the major seventh) and the whole-step below the root (the minor seventh). **Exercise 3** shows us how to work this out.

Sticking with the 12-bar blues in D, we can now add variety when it comes to setting up the downbeat of each bar. Notice how the framework of the bass-line is root-fifth motion, but the part takes advantage of the half-step below the fifth of the chord and either a whole step (the minor seventh) or chromatic line (minor seventh, major seventh) to approach the root. This method is often found in minor blues or swampy-sounding records, such as Creedence Clearwater Revival's 'Run Through The Jungle'. See you next month!

EXERCISE THREE



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Beginners Lesson

The great Steve Lawson brings us a new approach to studying bass at beginner level. The journey begins...

START HERE!

COMBINE RHYTHMIC GROUPINGS WITH REST STROKES

Welcome! This month we're going to continue looking at specific rhythmic groupings, but from a slightly different angle. We're going to combine the idea of distinct three-, four- and five-note phrases with a consideration of what they require to be played smooth as descending patterns on the neck.

Let's start by recapping a little about string-crossing. A number of times across the life of this column, we've talked about string-crossing as one of the most critical aspects of consistent playing, groove and phrasing. To summarise, when the line is ascending – going from the lower-pitched to higher-pitched strings – the first two fingers of our picking hand continue to alternate as we traverse the neck. Play the C Major scale in Exercise 1, starting at the eighth fret on the E string to see what that feels like.

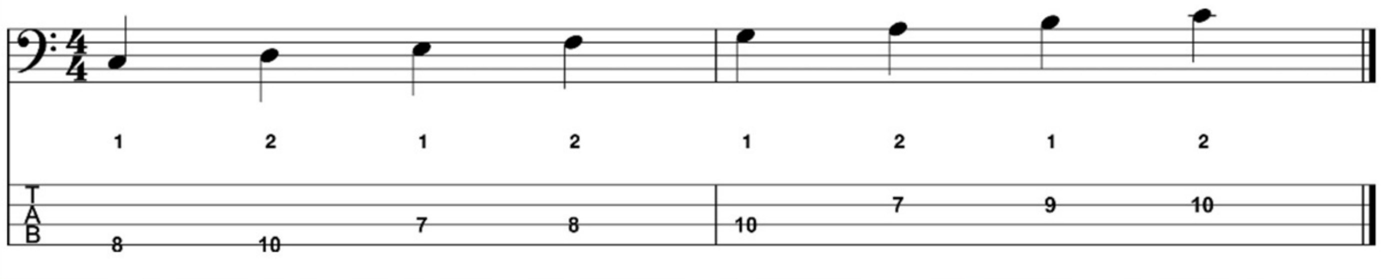
EXERCISE ONE

You'll notice that the picking hand pattern is strictly alternate, but because of the odd number of notes on the A string, we lead onto the D string with our second finger instead of the first. This is worth paying attention to, because depending on the angle of your picking hand in relation to the strings, and how high or low you hold your bass while playing, it can be more awkward to lead with one finger than the other – and this will disrupt the flow of your lines considerably. Making sure you get comfortable with that at this stage will help you and your lines get more complex.

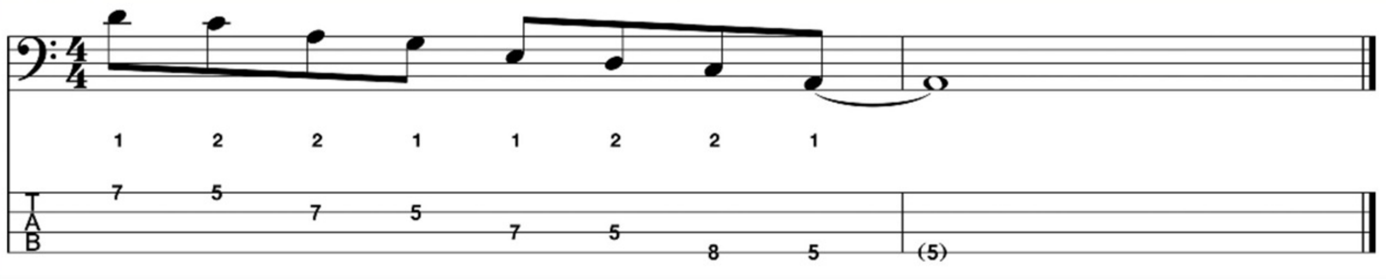
We're ultimately aiming for a consistent application of technique that we don't need to think about consciously from moment to moment. If you're in the middle of a line wondering whether the next note needs to be played with your index or middle finger, it's a sure sign that you're underprepared for the line, and it's time to step away from playing the song and refine the consistency of your string crossing so you can do it without thinking. This is not an overnight process – so be kind to yourself as you take the time to learn this.

However, the way that our leading finger switches when we've got an odd number of notes on a string versus an even number of notes is our start point for thinking about what happens when we're descending from the higher-pitched strings to the lower ones. Here, we're going to look at a technique known as raking, where we play

EXERCISE ONE



EXERCISE TWO



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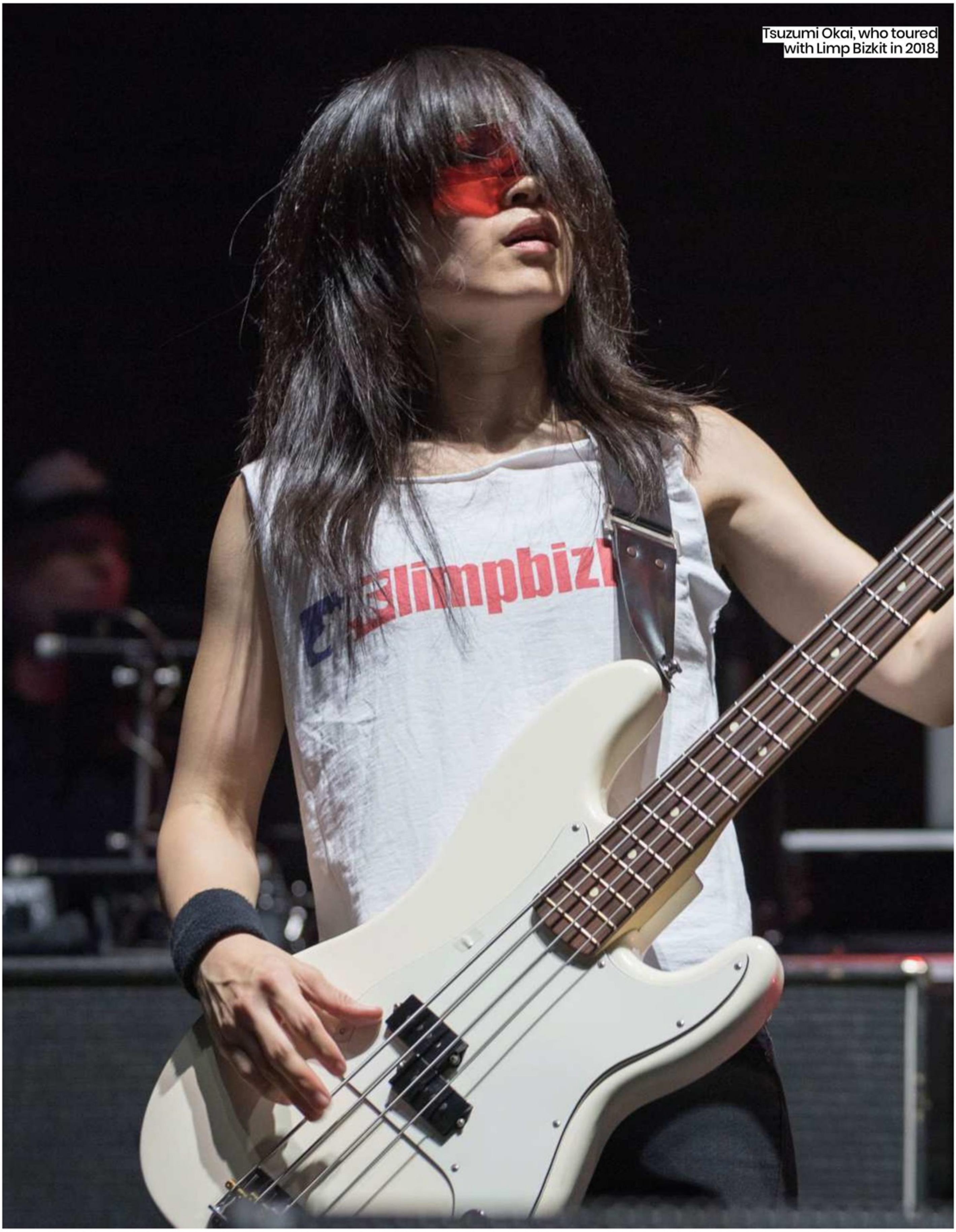

Tsuzumi Okai, who toured with Limp Bizkit in 2018.

© Andrea Friedrich/Redferns

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the last note on one string and the first note on the next string with the same finger.

This is definitely not the only way to pick, and some players prefer the sound and feel of maintaining strict alternation on the way down as well as up, but raking is a common, efficient and economical way to traverse the strings. In the journey towards finding your own voice, it's always wise to explore several options for how we make sounds and approach rhythm. The techniques we choose impact not just our dexterity but the tone we get, the degree of consistency from note to note, the comfort when crossing between strings and the kinds of phrases that are made possible.

If you also play guitar, or regularly talk to guitarists about technique, this is the equivalent of their conversation about using strict alternate picking, economy picking and legato playing.

The conversations are never-ending, but each one is hopefully an invitation to pick up your bass and explore some new aspect of technique with fresh ears. With that in mind, let's take a look at raking and how it impacts our phrase creation.

In contrast to ascending the strings, even numbers of notes on each string will maintain the same leading finger and odd numbers will change it. The opposite is true when descending. This makes it easy to practise switching from crossing with our first and second fingers. We just need a two-note descending pattern, which is what Exercise 2 gives us, using a slightly extended A minor pentatonic shape.

EXERCISE TWO

We can see the alternate fingering marked on the score. This is because of another concept we've talked about before, the rest stroke.

A rest stroke is when the finger you play a note with comes to rest on the string below. When we're playing repeated notes on the same string, this helps keep our plucking motion consistent and helps with muting. When we come to cross strings using this technique, we're taking advantage of the fact that your finger is already in place to play the note on the next string down – having come to rest on it after the previous note.

When we play the pattern in Exercise 2, we need to be focused on economy of motion, with that rest stroke action set up to play the next note effortlessly. It certainly won't feel effortless at the start, and may even be a bit of a headache in terms of co-ordination if you're not used to the technique, but after a while you'll find that you've eliminated a whole lot of movement from your picking hand.

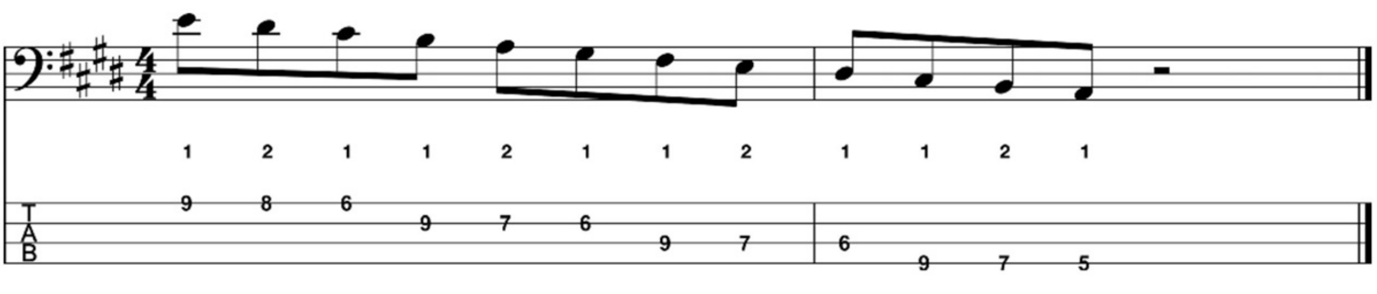
It's worth taking it really slow and paying particular attention to the sound of the first note on each string. Sometimes, depending on the angle of your fingers on the strings, the tone can be softer and less distinct on that first note. In the middle of a faster run, those changes in tone can be pleasing to the ear, but in the context of a groove it's important to know how to make every note count. As usual, fixing this stuff now, at slow speeds and with simple versions of the patterns, will save you huge headaches later on once your technique has become ingrained – along with any bad habits that you've acquired!

Once you've got comfortable with the fingering indicated in Exercise 2, swap over and start on your second finger instead of your first.

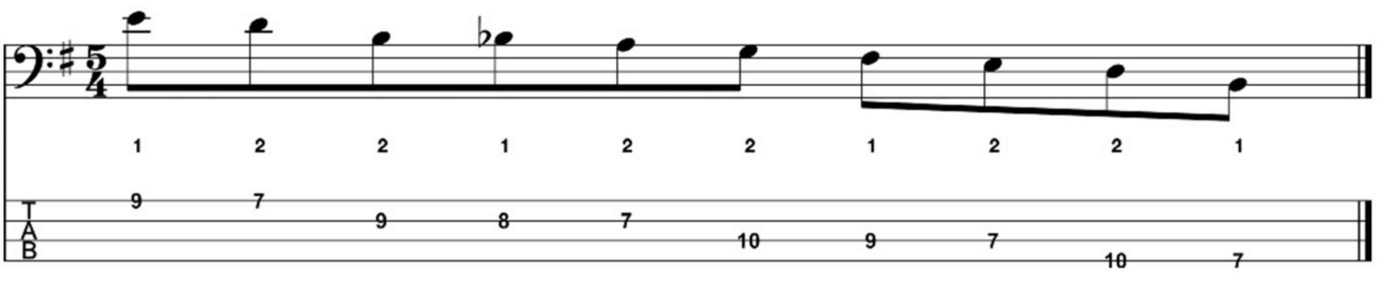
Then, let's see what happens when we make it three notes on each string. Exercise 3 is a descending E Major scale, continuing down on to the E string, and ending on A.

We're aiming for a consistent application of technique that we don't need to think about consciously from moment to moment

EXERCISE THREE



EXERCISE FOUR



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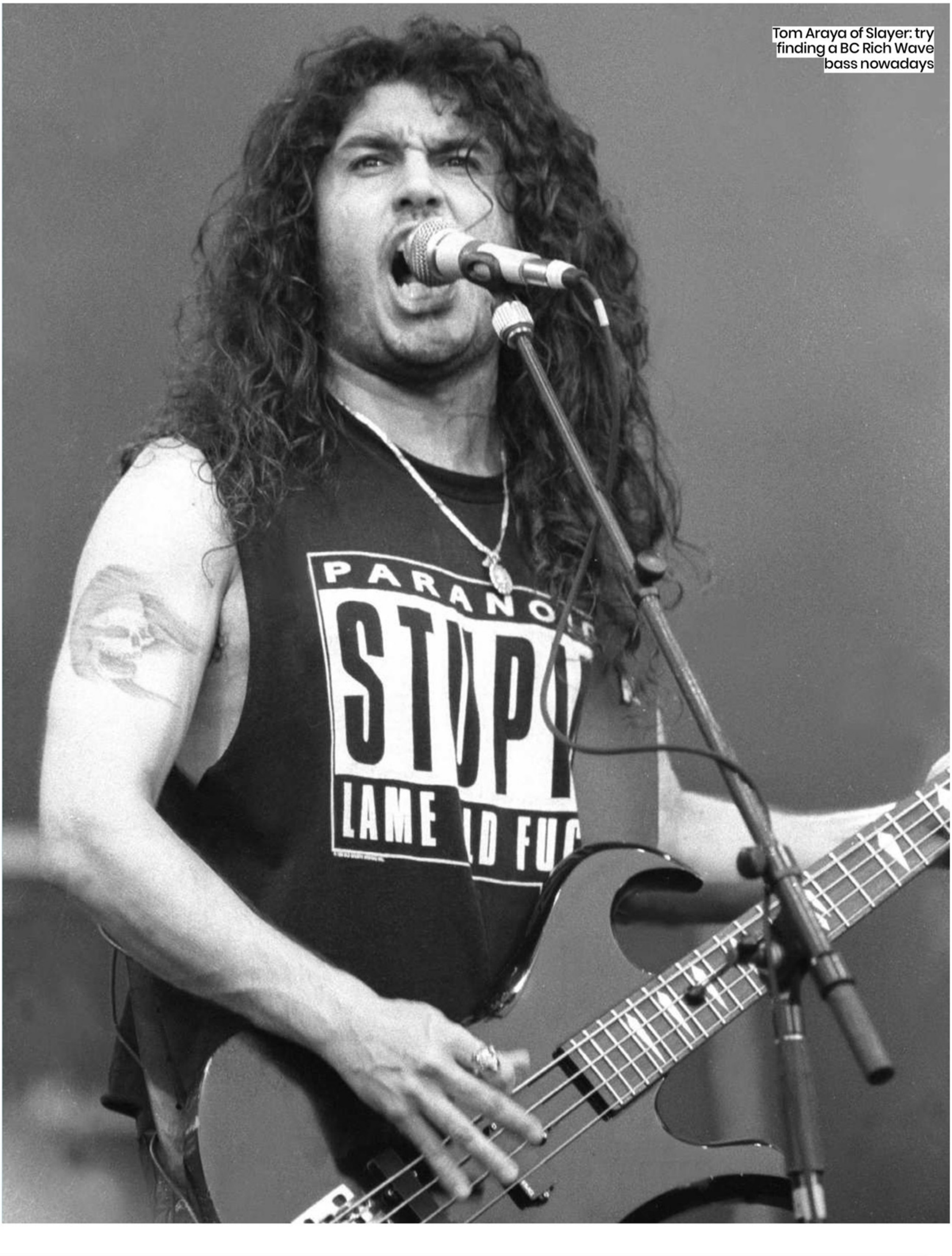

Tom Araya of Slayer: try finding a BC Rich Wave bass nowadays

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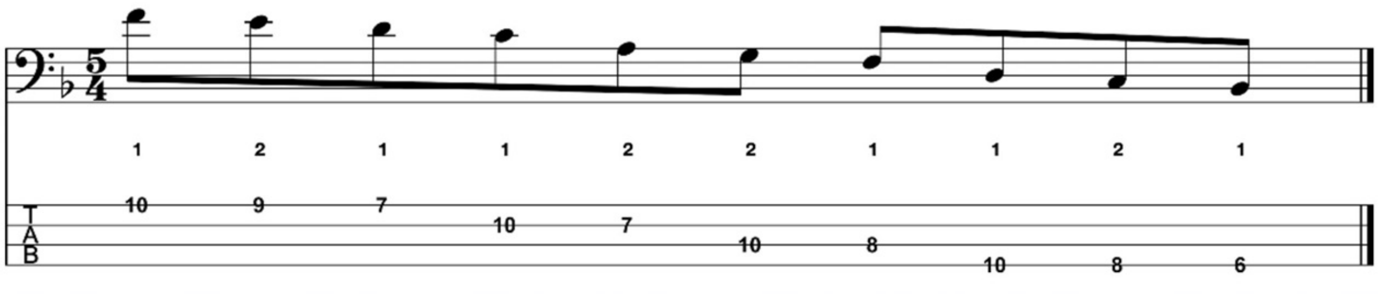
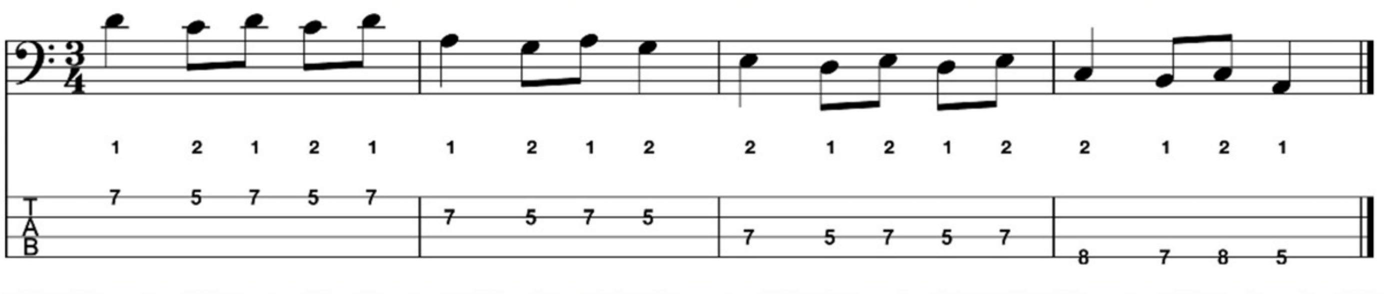
EXERCISE FIVE



EXERCISE SIX



EXERCISE THREE

Now we have a consistent index, middle, index pattern, with the last use of your middle finger on a string setting you up to play the first note on the next string. It's clean, consistent and relatively easy to commit to memory.

We now have a formula for even-number combinations on a string causing us to switch leading fingers, and odd numbers keeping the leading finger consistent across multiple strings. Let's see what that does to a couple of five-note patterns, grouped as two notes and three notes, and then reversed. Exercise 4 gives us a repeated 10-note cyclic pattern that alternates between the two.

EXERCISE FOUR

As you can see from the TAB we've got two notes, three notes, three notes, and two notes as we move across the strings, and that's what dictates the starting finger for each string. In this instance we end up with every switch being with your second finger. This is particularly useful to practise if you find it difficult to lead with your second finger. Getting the movement across the strings consistent as you switch fingers takes time, and needs to be tackled slowly.

A quick word about the phrase being in 5/4. This is simply a way of making 10 eighth notes add up to a single bar, to give us an easily repeating loop. So-called 'odd' time signatures are less common in Western music than 4/4, 6/8 or 12/8, but there are plenty of places in the world where those odd-number subdivisions are very common indeed, so to assume that thinking about a phrase that's five beats long as 'advanced' is a misnomer. Learning to count it and feel it will help you a lot when it comes to playing songs that use odd time patterns, such as Dave Brubeck's 'Take Five', Pink Floyd's 'Money' and Tool's 'Schism'.

Let's turn the phrase around, so that the number of notes across the strings is distributed as three notes, two notes, two notes and three notes, and see what happens to the fingering. Exercise 5 does this using a descending F Major scale with a couple of notes omitted.

These exercises are designed to work on as many combinations of odd- and even-number phrases across the strings as possible

EXERCISE FIVE

By swapping around the two- and three-note sections of the phrase, we're now leading with completely different fingers. We can try as many different combinations of notes and patterns as come to mind. If we play four notes on one string, perhaps by repeating one or more notes, we will have the same situation as with two notes, where an even number of notes causes the leading finger to swap. Likewise, five or seven notes on a string will keep the leading finger the same.

Let's finish up by looking at an example that's in 3/4 but phrases alternately in five- and four-note groupings, using longer notes to fill out the bar.

EXERCISE SIX

Here we've used the same notes except one as Exercise 2, but with repetition and a rhythmic change we've given it a very different feel, and shifted it into 3/4.

Getting comfortable with rest strokes takes time, and getting comfortable leading with both your index and middle fingers as you descend the strings takes time. By taking it slowly, it will soon become second nature – and this is an aspect of playing you don't want to be thinking about while you're playing.

These exercises and your variations on them are designed to work on as many combinations of odd- and even-number phrases across the strings as possible, so your muscle memory is primed to lead with the right finger every time. This way, your attention can be on locking in with the drummer. See you next month!

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STEP UP!

EXPLORE DOMINANT CHORDS

Phil Mann is a stage and session star and educator extraordinaire. Get ready to step up your bass game!

Have you ever contemplated writing a book? You could write a huge volume about Dominant chords. Whether it's due to their involvement in a rudimentary 12-bar blues, as the essential cog in generating perfect cadences, or as a key component in the production of advanced reharmonisation techniques, dominant chords are the gift that keeps on giving. As I see it, they're the heavyweight champions of the harmonic world!

Like tertian structures, these four-note chords are built from nothing more than stacked intervals of 3rds. Let's explore them...

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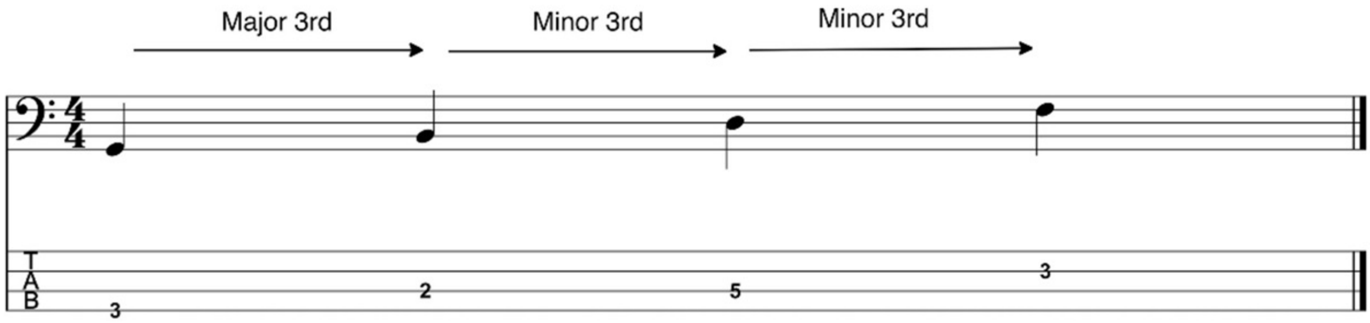
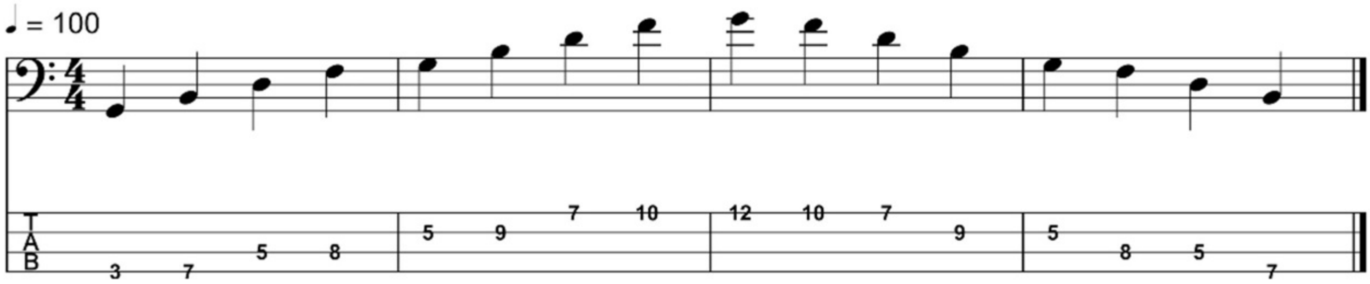
Sid Vicious (left): if only he'd had a lesson with Phil.

EXERCISE ONE



Exercise 1 denotes the root, major 3rd, perfect 5th and ♭7th of the structure, but more importantly, shows the formula used to generate those intervals. Although our sights have always been firmly focused upon the practical, please ensure you take the time to memorise this formula: Dom7th = major 3rd + minor 3rd + minor 3rd.

EXERCISE TWO



Once committed to memory, the formula in our initial exercise can be used to generate lush two-octave arpeggios spanning the entirety of our fingerboards. Thankfully, playing these structures can be relatively straightforward, as they only require the use of two digits in the fretting hand; the index and pinky.

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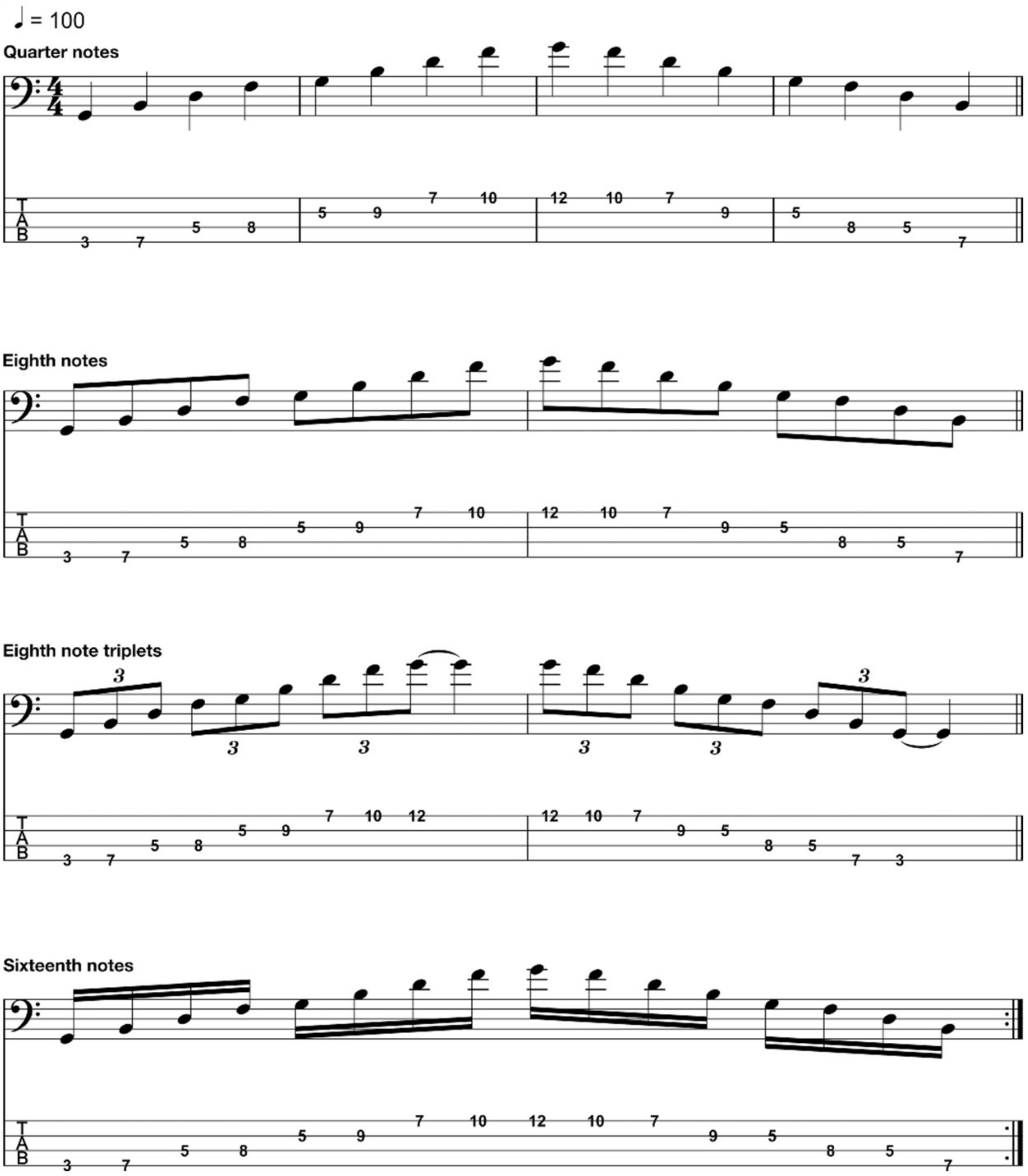
EXERCISE THREE



Many musicians employ a click or drum track in their practice regimes, increasing the tempo as skill sets refine. Most songs only have one tempo, though, so a more effective strategy might be to deliver a variety of subdivisions against a single tempo. Refinement of this ability will naturally enhance the efficiency of your rhythmic portrayal, without compromising your time-keeping. Exercise 3 requires us to deliver dominant 7th arpeggios at one set tempo using different rhythmic subdivisions.

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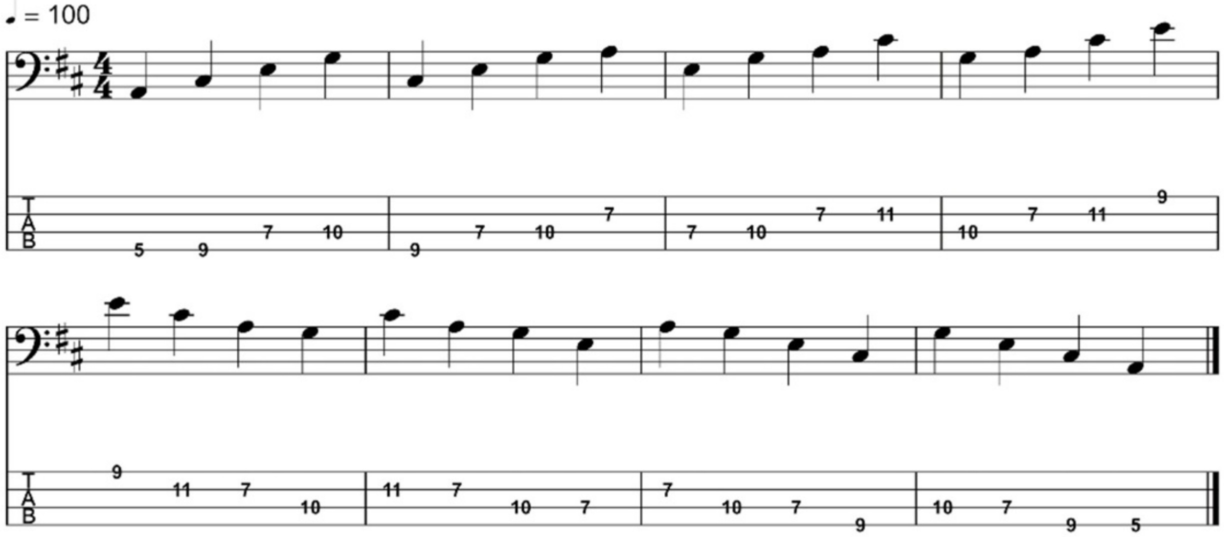
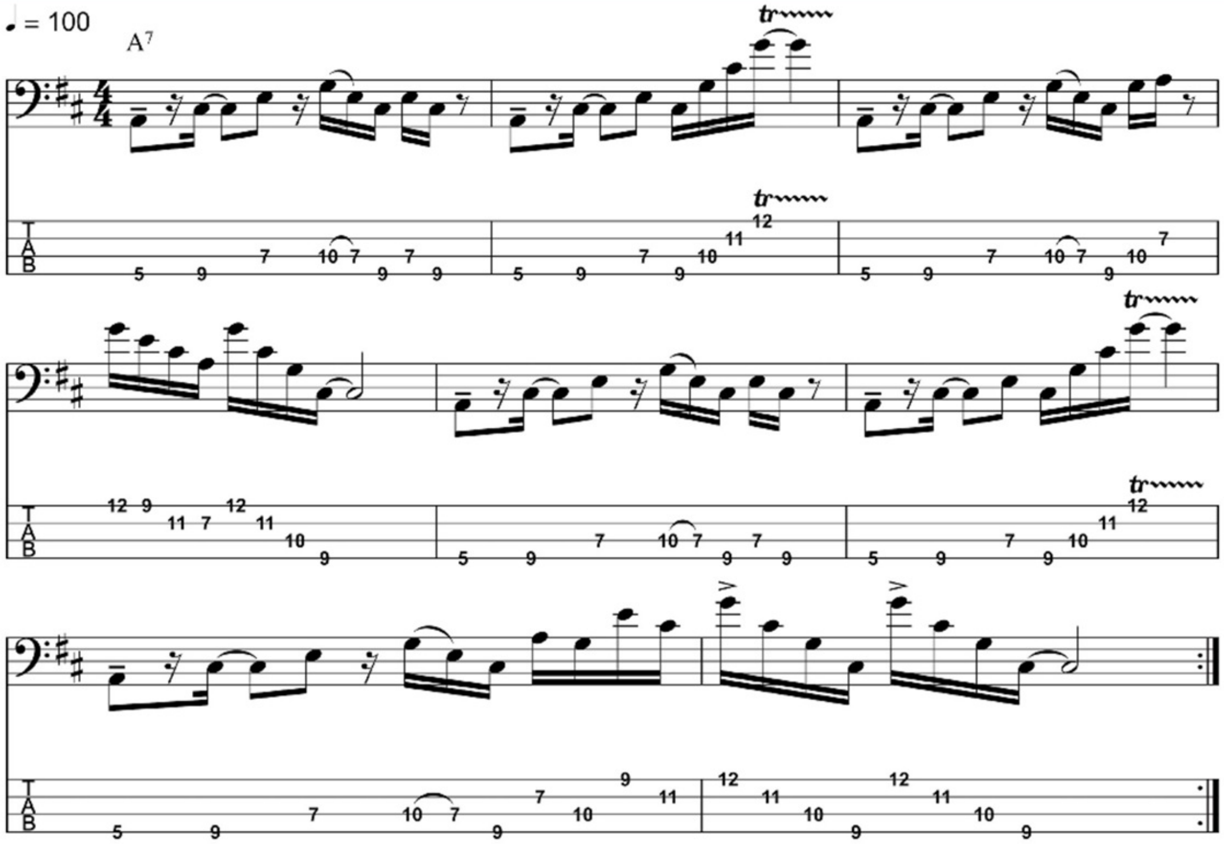
EXERCISE FOUR



Using just four notes to portray harmony may seem a little limiting, but try using inversions. Consider that a 7th arpeggio in root position can be delivered in 24 different variations: extending the concept to the subsequent inversions generates a total of 96 possibilities, and in all 12 keys, you'd have 1,152 of them to worry about. Exercise 4 delivers the dominant 7th in an ascending and descending fashion, through root position and its subsequent inversions.

EXERCISE FIVE



Although the first step in any melodic study involves identifying the associated chord tones, considering the position in which you portray them is not often the second. However, studying different fingerings reveals an array of inspiring melodic perspectives which might otherwise be overlooked. One example of this is the stacked ♭5th intervals between the major 3rd and ♭7th intervals of our target arpeggio. This distance of a tritone can be produced from either step and generates a repeating pattern. Exercise 5 uses this insight to generate a variety of lavish motifs, the first of which is on the third beat of measure two.

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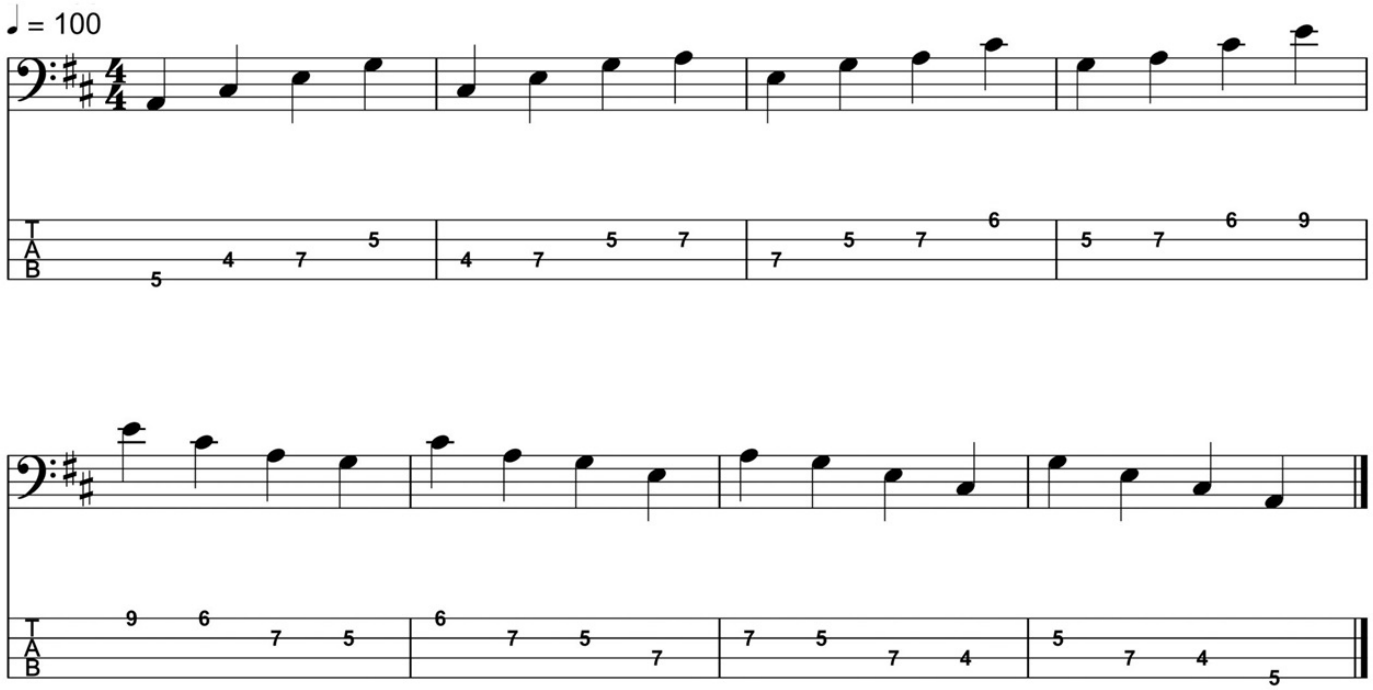
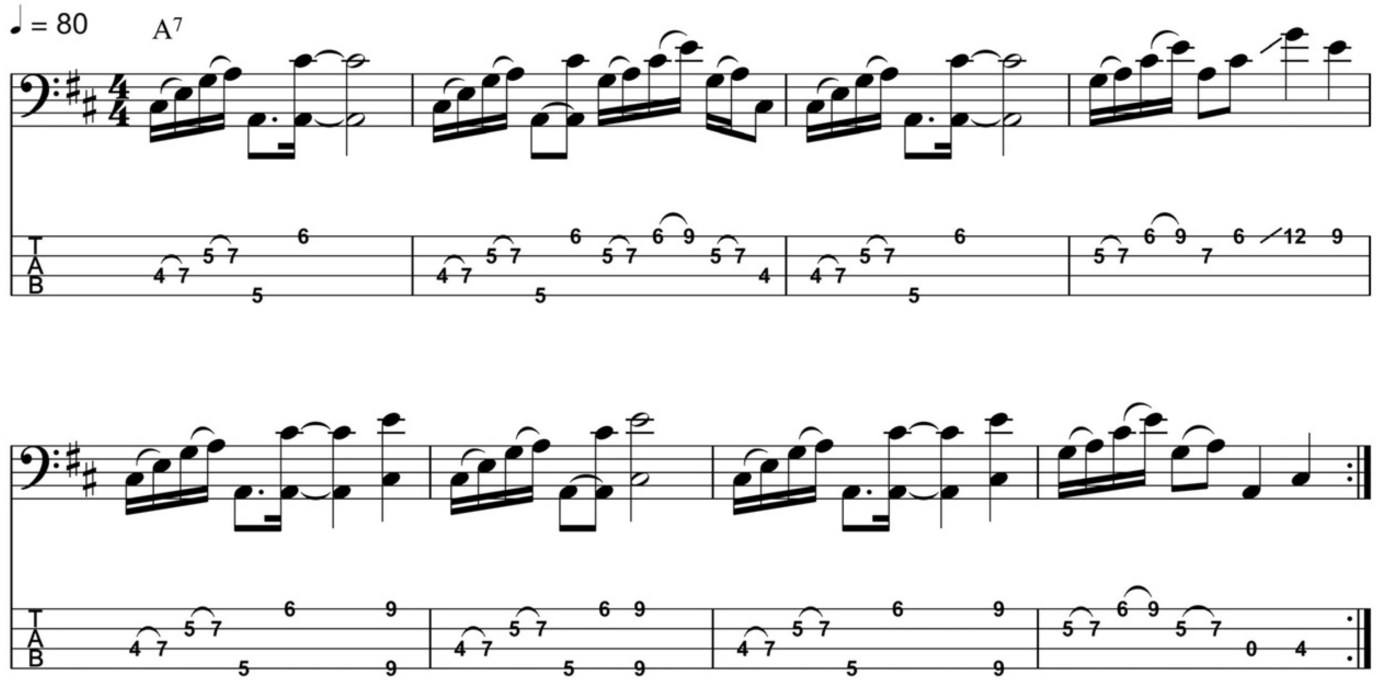
EXERCISE SIX



Instruments tuned in fourths allow us many ways to deliver diatonic information. Although there are many further fingering possibilities, three primary options are the most employable with tertian structures. Exercise 6 gives us a more perpendicular approach to playing dominant 7th arpeggios, with ascending and descending slurs not obtainable from the more linear design.

EXERCISE SEVEN



Like the last study, Exercise 7 features a number of ascending slurs only accessible once a dominant 7th arpeggio is portrayed in a perpendicular manner. For example, when played in a linear fashion, the ♭7th interval and root note (interpreted as an octave) are on different strings, making the delivery of a slur between the pitches impossible. This is also the case for the major 3rd and perfect 5th intervals. Played perpendicularly, both of these intervals are more accessible.

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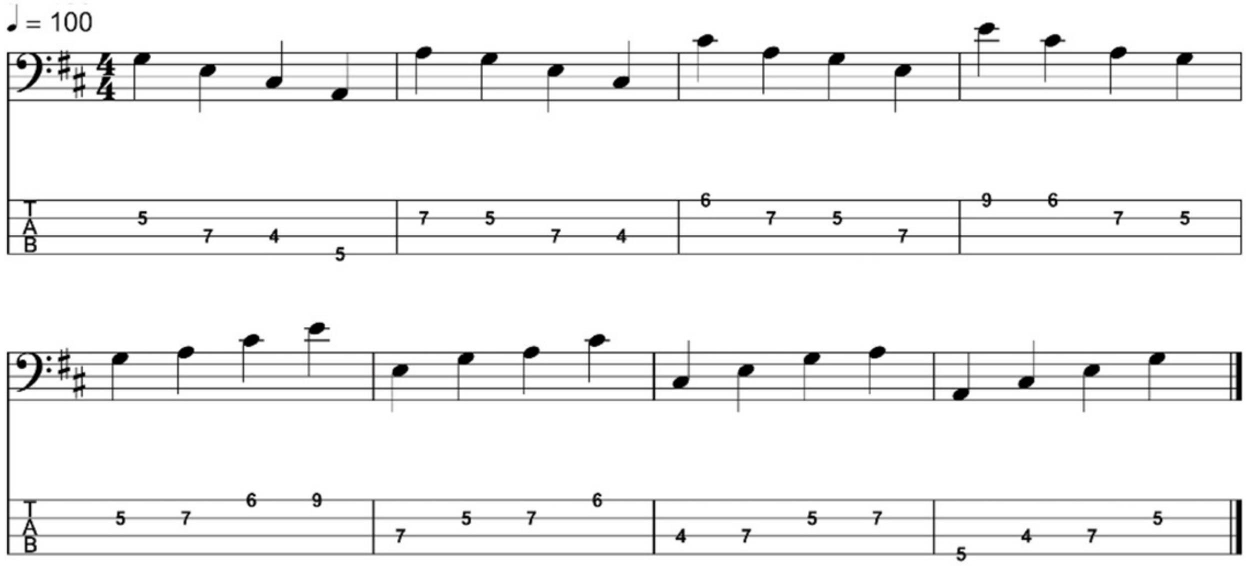
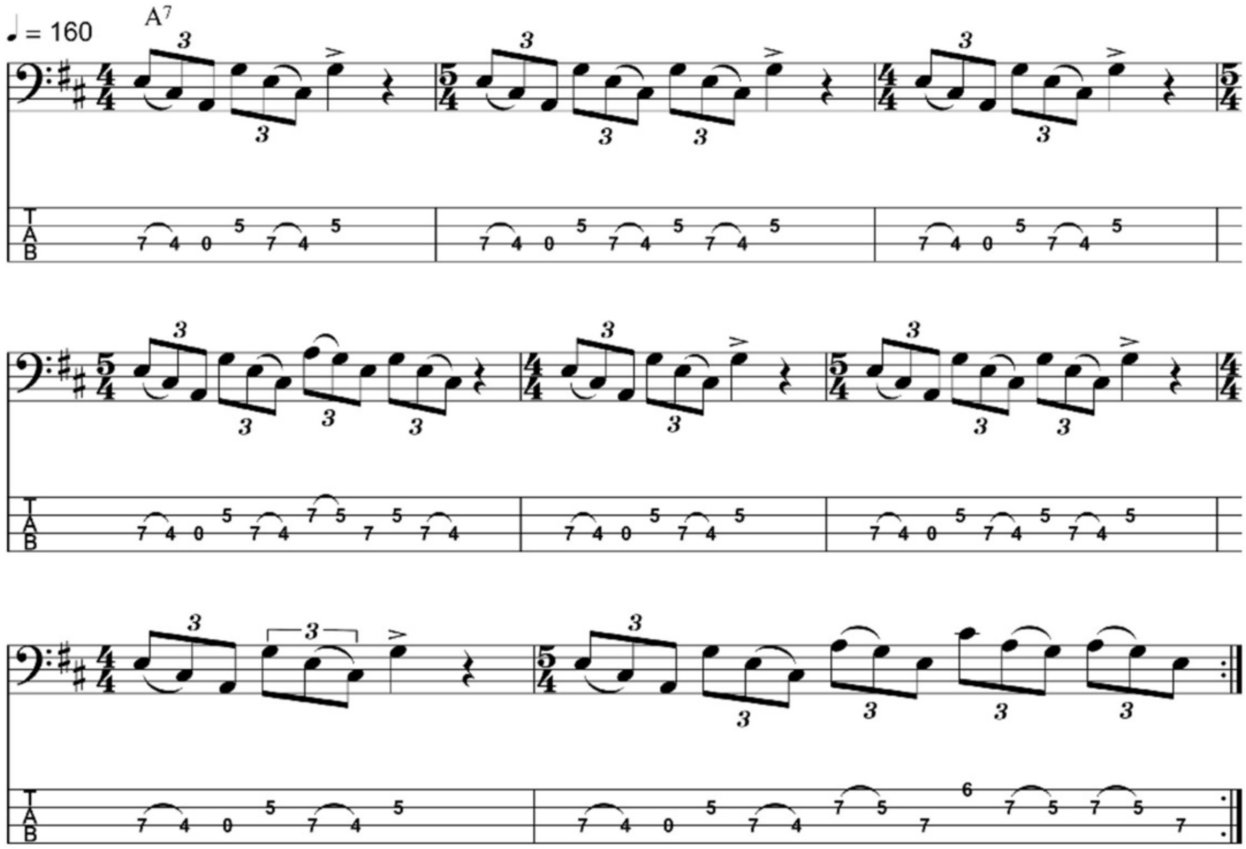
EXERCISE EIGHT



Sometimes a seemingly insignificant shift in perception leads to fresh inspiration. Although there are no new notes to discover in Exercise 8, the change in their delivery is the inspiration for the melodic motif in Exercise 9. Work through these measures, considering perpendicular and linear fingerings.

EXERCISE NINE



The motif in Exercise 9 has a certain fusion vibe, requiring you to deliver a triplet-inspired motif over alternating time meters. In the first instance you'll notice that it's in common time, but in the next measure it moves to 5/4. The result is a workout that references the former dominant 7th arpeggios.

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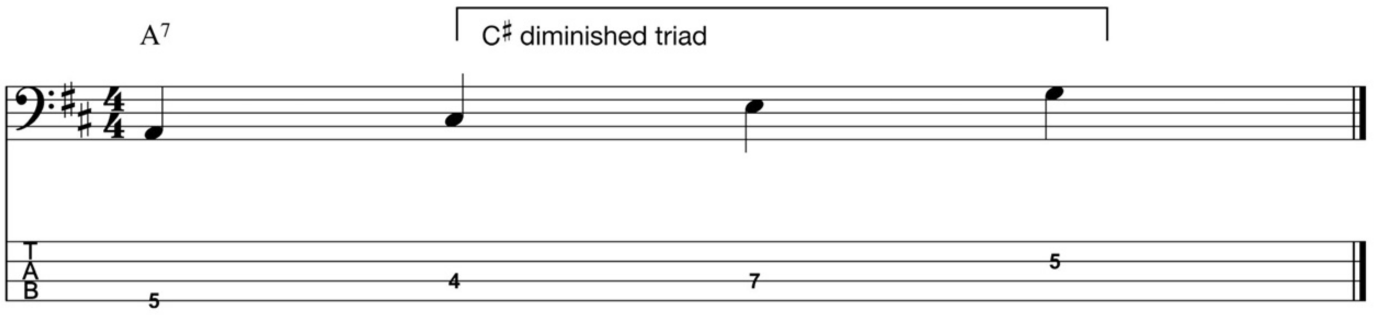
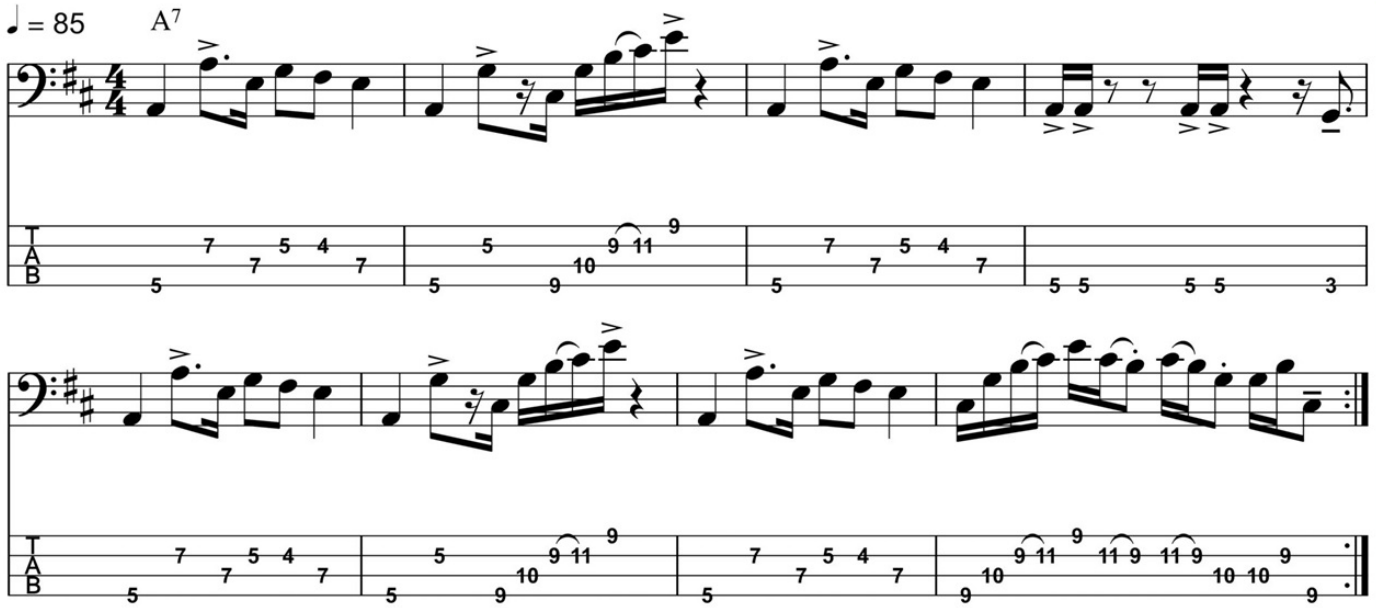
EXERCISE TEN

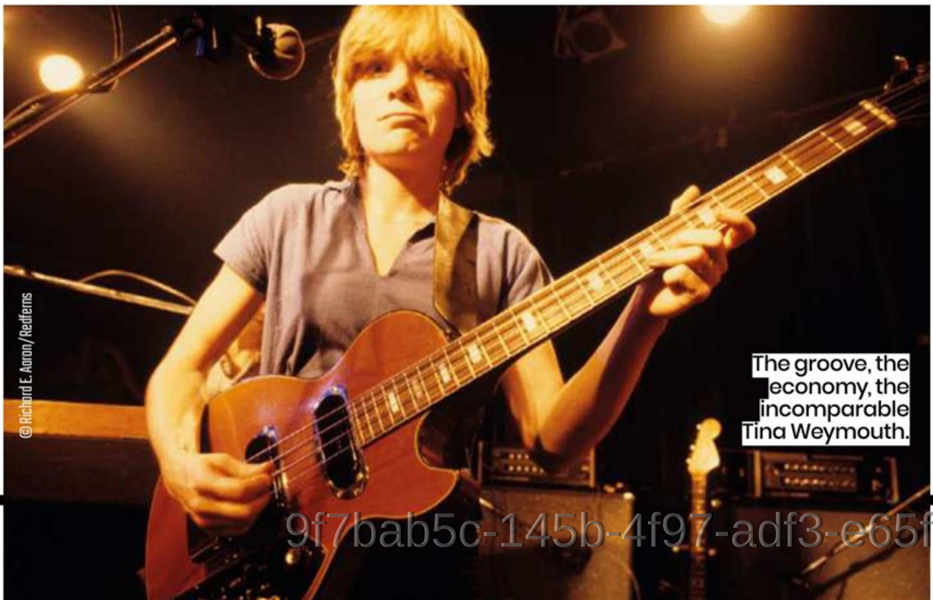


Earlier in this lesson, we said that a dominant 7th arpeggio consists of a root note, major 3rd, perfect 5th and ♭7th intervals. If you omit the root note, the remaining pitches produce a diminished triad. It's always possible to interpret a dominant 7th arpeggio using a diminished triad constructed from the 3rd of the parent chord. What's more, if you extend this three-note diminished structure to a four-note minor 7th♭5 arpeggio, you can include the diatonic 9th. Both of these insights will prove valuable when you're playing dominant vocabulary.

EXERCISE ELEVEN



Finally, let's play a C# minor7th♭5 arpeggio over an A7 chord. The concept is easy: locate the 3rd of the dominant chord and deliver a half-diminished structure. Note that minor 7th♭5 arpeggios are also built using tertian construction, but in contrast to dominant chords, the formula is delivered in the order: minor 3rd, minor 3rd, major 3rd. Until next time!



The groove, the economy, the incomparable Tina Weymouth.

If you only practise one thing this month...

As many a blues musician will tell you, blues progressions are usually made up of dominant 7th chords. If you only get time to practise one thing this month, learn the dominant 7th arpeggio in a linear fashion and then use that approach to play a conventional 12-bar sequence. Have fun with this!

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Ace bass educator Stuart Clayton guides us to the peak of the bass skills pyramid. Achieve your goals here!

AND FINALLY...

PLAY CHORDAL FINGERSTYLE

Hello! I'm honoured to be filling in for Rich Brown this month. It's certainly nice to be back and stretching my advanced techniques muscles again.

For this month's column I thought it would be useful to cover the chordal fingerstyle technique. This isn't something that you'll require in most conventional playing situations, but it's a great way to learn to apply harmonic/chordal ideas on the bass. As we bass players don't play a traditionally chordal instrument, I consider this a great way to stretch our understanding of chords and harmony. You'll essentially be looking at music in a similar to way to that of a guitarist or pianist, rather than only thinking about single-note bass-lines.

> **The chordal fingerstyle technique is a great way to stretch our understanding of chords and harmony**

In this column I've used a fingering system called PIMA, which is often employed by classical guitarists. This is essentially a naming convention for the fingers of the picking hand:

p – thumb
i – index finger
m – middle finger
a – third finger

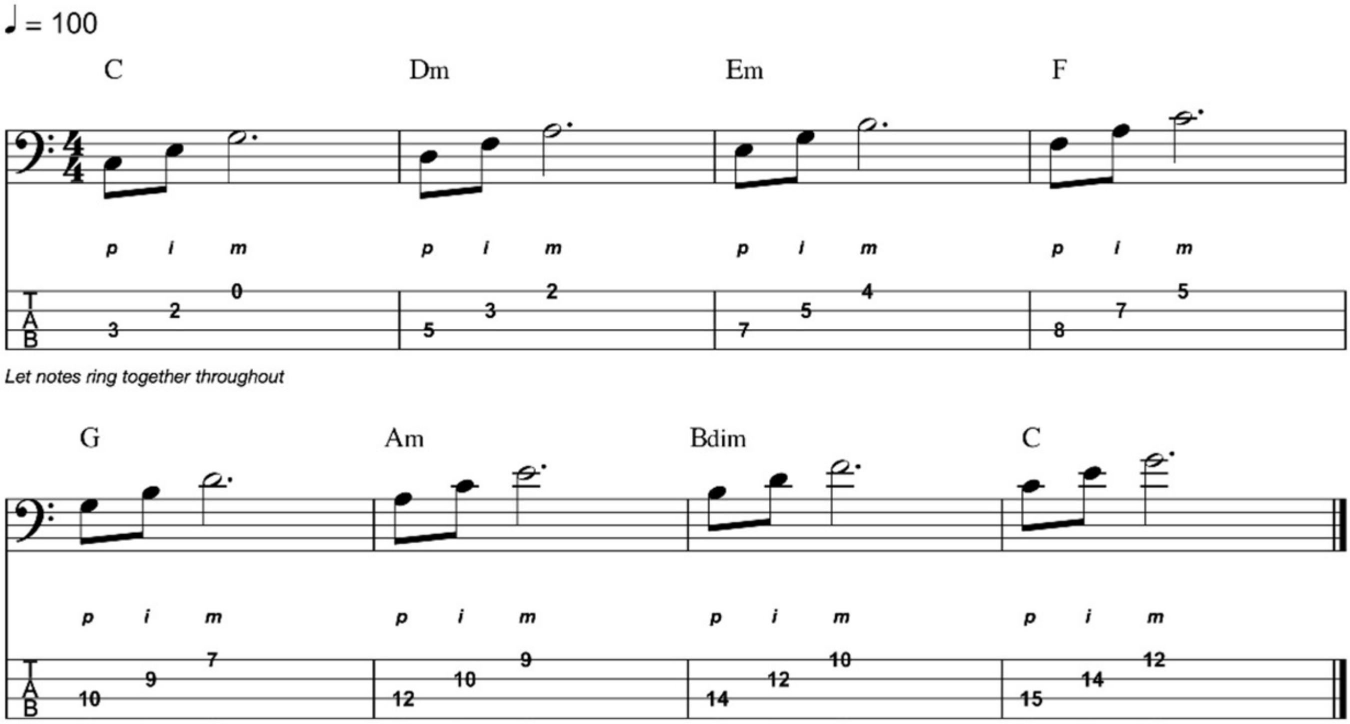
These letters are derived from the Spanish names for these fingers (pulgar, indice, medio, anular). In the following exercises we'll only be using the thumb, index and middle fingers.

Let's dive right in...

Whether you play electric or upright, awareness of the PIMA system is useful.

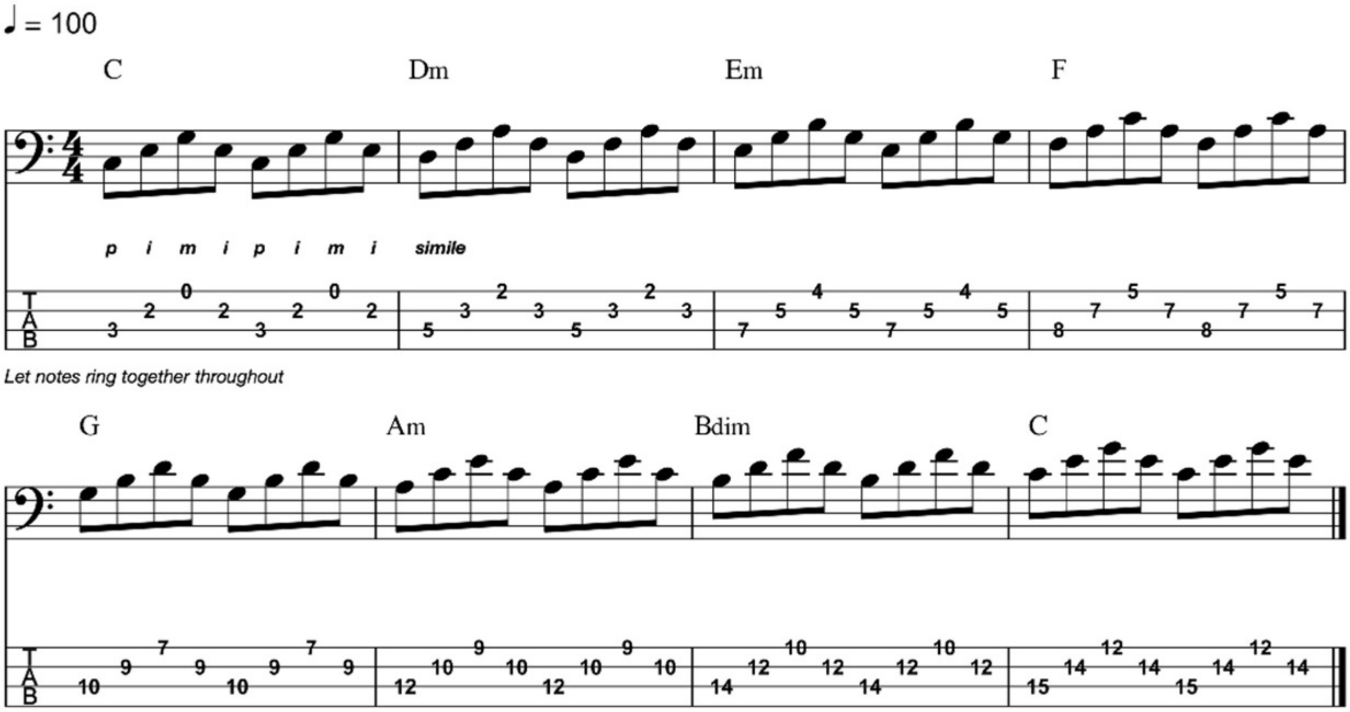
Images of Jazz/Heritage Images via Getty

EXERCISE ONE



This exercise is a good way to start using the chordal fingerstyle technique. We will be outlining the basic triads of the key of C major using the thumb (p), first (i) and second (m) fingers. As with all of the exercises that follow, you can allow the notes in each bar to ring into one another – this will enhance the chordal nature of what we're playing.

EXERCISE TWO



This exercise uses the same basic triads from the previous exercise. This time, however, we will be using a continuous motion with the picking hand: p–i–m–i. This sequence is played twice in each bar. Again, be sure to allow the notes to ring together for the full effect.

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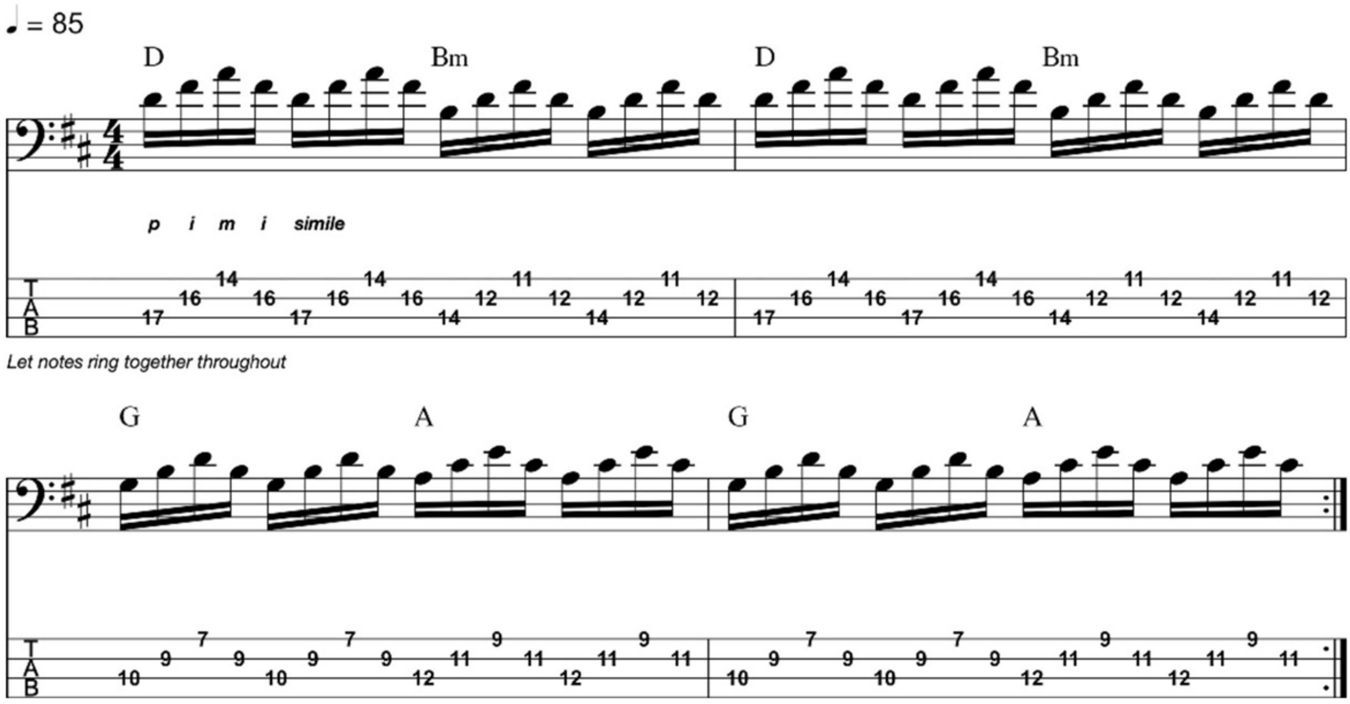
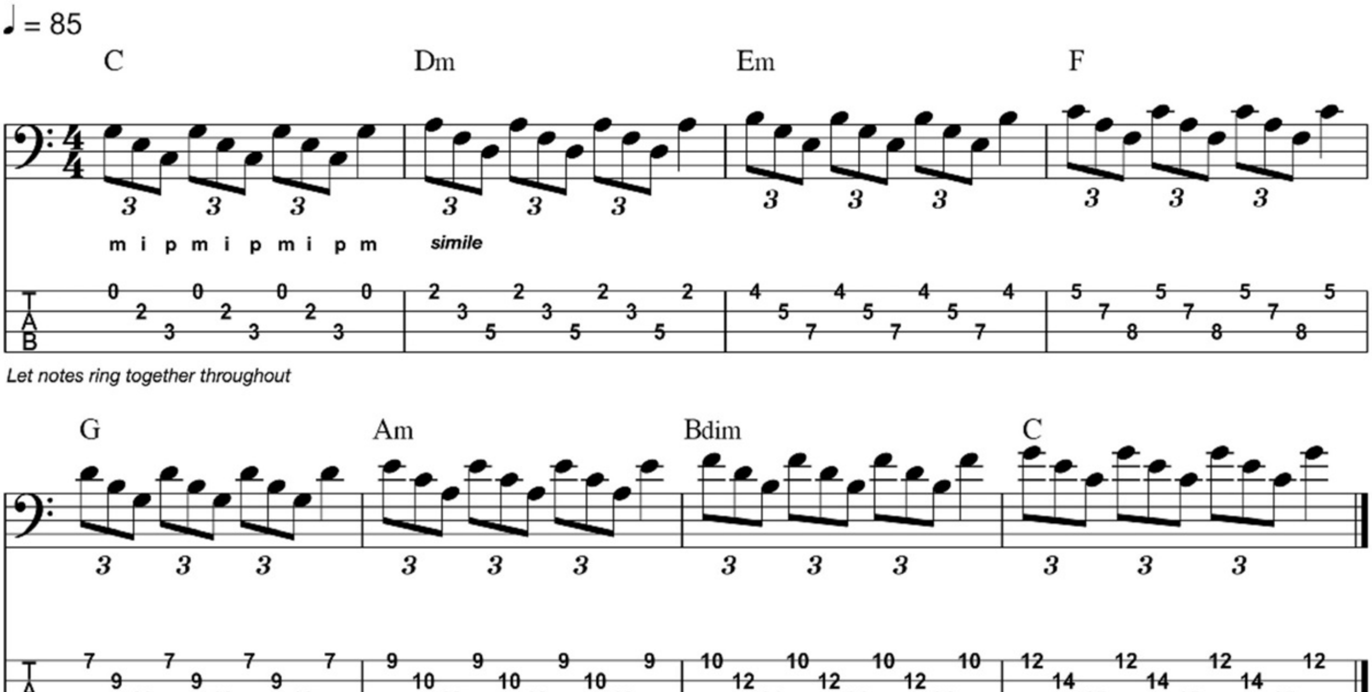
EXERCISE THREE



This exercise puts the picking sequence from the previous exercise to use. This time, we're in the key of D major, playing a basic progression using chords I, vi, IV and V.

EXERCISE FOUR



This exercise illustrates an alternative picking sequence: m-i-p. This three-note sequence works perfectly when played as triplets. Once again, we'll be applying this to diatonic triads in the key of C major.

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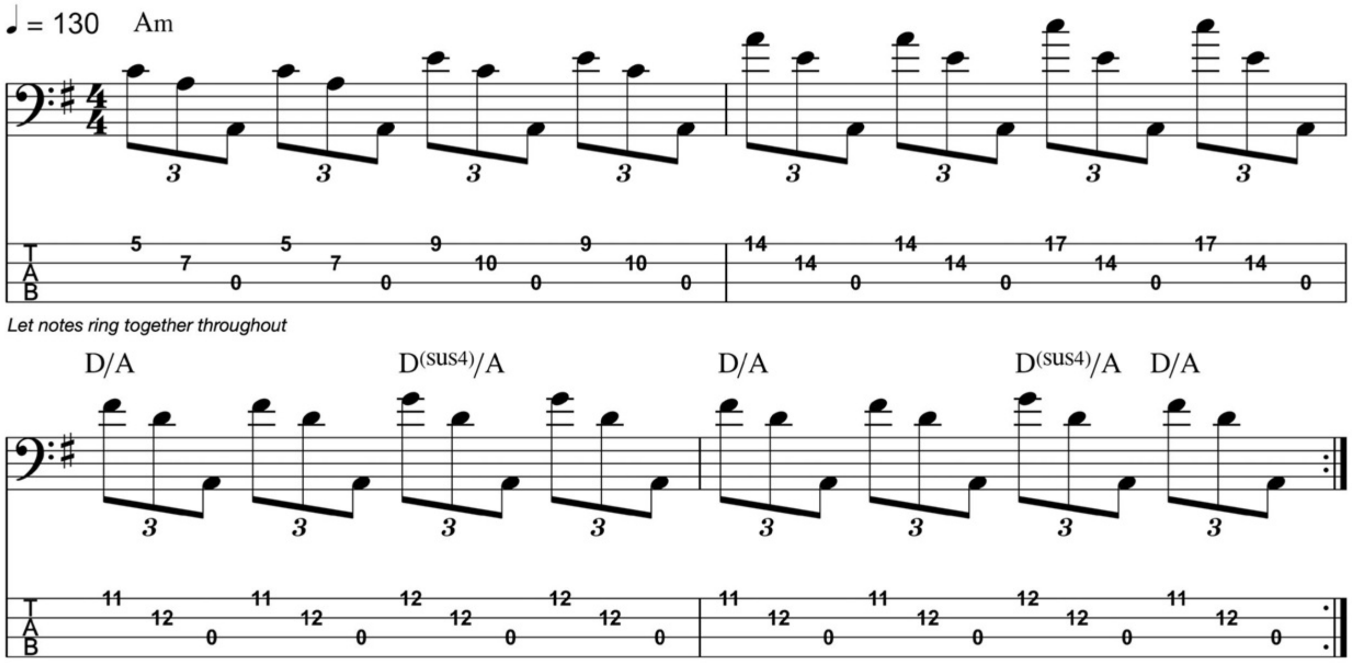
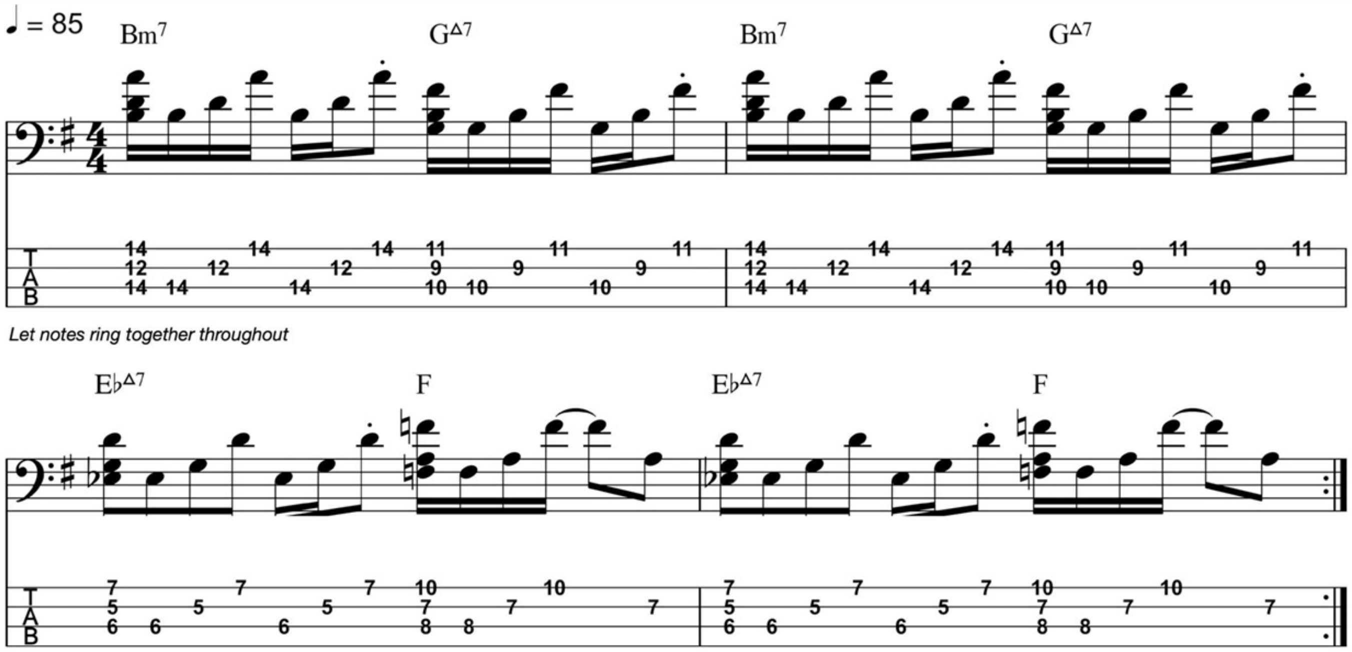
EXERCISE FIVE



This exercise is a more interesting application of the picking pattern that was introduced in the previous exercise. In the first two bars, an A minor sound is outlined. The highest note ascends C – E – A – C, as does the note on the D-string, which is always a chord tone. Throughout, the open A-string maintains a foundational root note. In the second half of the exercise, the same picking pattern is used to outline a second inversion D major chord, which also references the suspended fourth. You'll hear that upper register notes played over low open strings sound incredibly effective on the bass.

The next five exercises are slightly adventurous applications of the chordal fingerstyle technique. With each of these, allow the notes to ring into one another where possible. I'm guessing you've gotten the hang of the PIMA system by now, so fingerings have not been written for these exercises.

EXERCISE SIX



At the beginning of each phrase, three notes are plucked simultaneously. Although this isn't something we've covered, the technique required to play them remains the same. This exercise features a more harmonically adventurous chord sequence.

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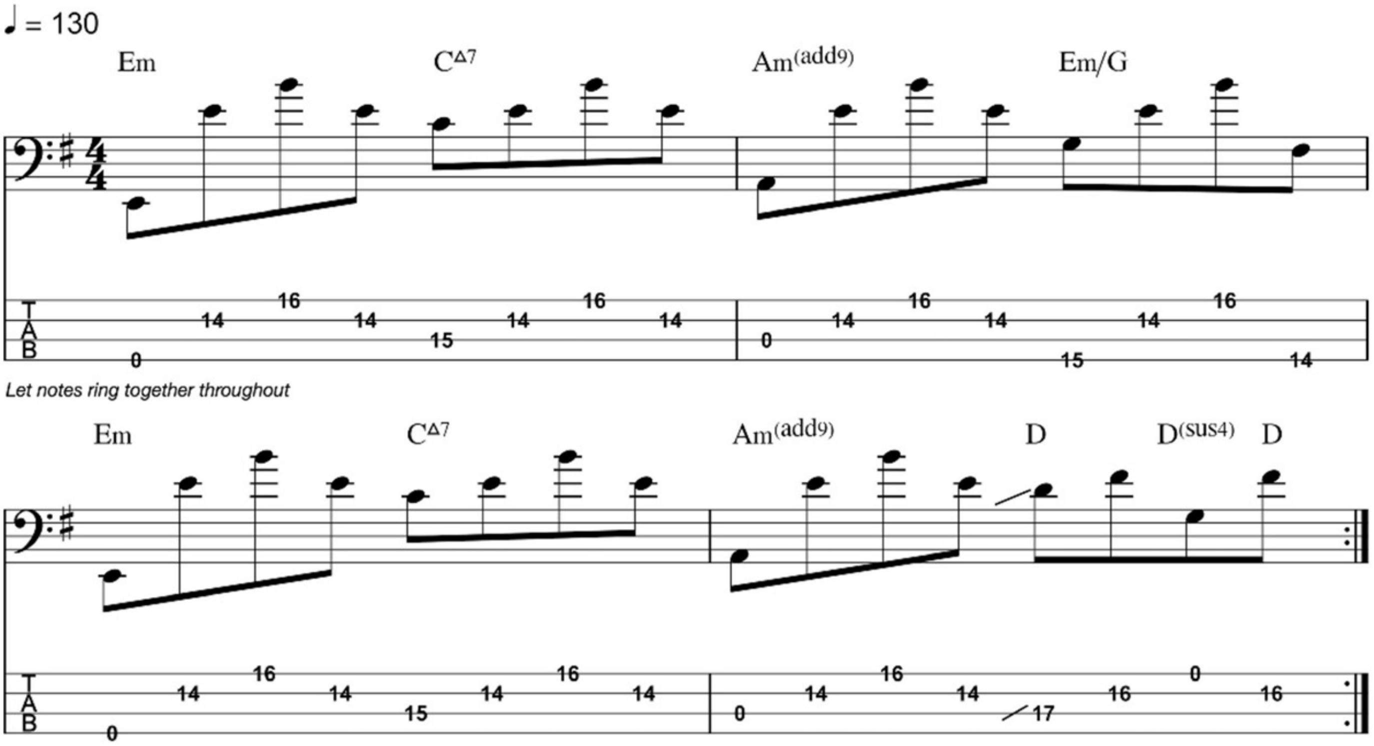
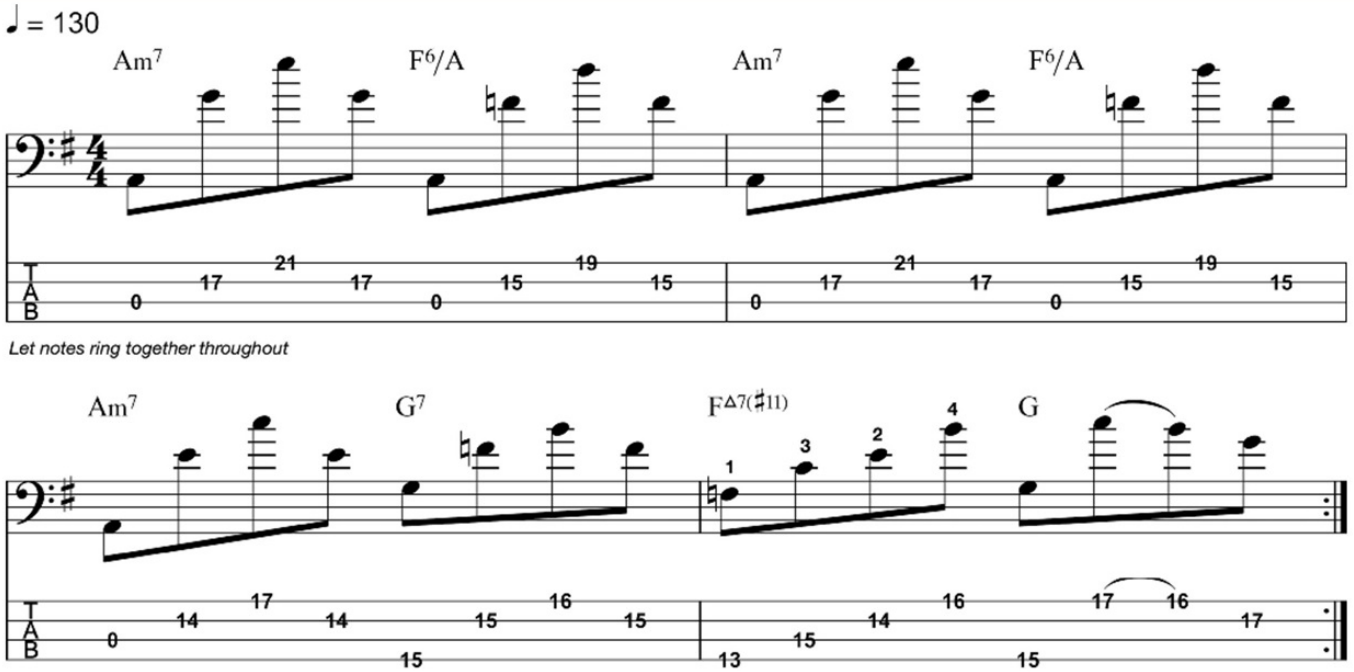
EXERCISE SEVEN



This exercise uses the idea of upper register chordal parts played over a low open string bass note, in this case, the open E-string. Note the use of the open G-string to imply a Dsus4 chord in the fourth bar. This note is effective, despite being an octave lower than the rest of the part.

EXERCISE EIGHT



This exercise features some more adventurous chord movements. The Fmaj7#11 chord in the fourth bar can be tricky to play, and I recommend fingering it as follows: use your first finger for the F on the E-string, and the third for the C on the A-string. Then, your second finger should fret the E on the D-string and the fourth can fret the B on the G-string. Playing this chord in isolation is one thing, but moving to it from another chord is very difficult. You will need to rehearse this shape change slowly to begin with.

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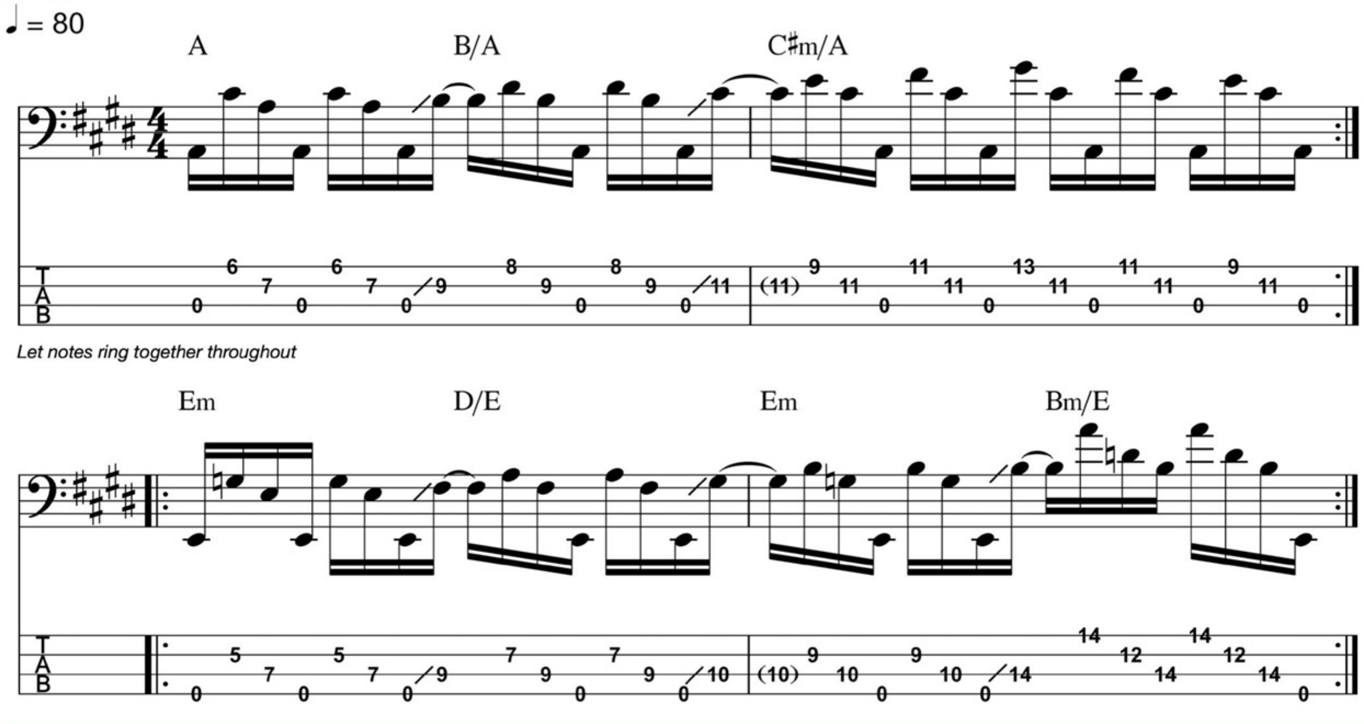
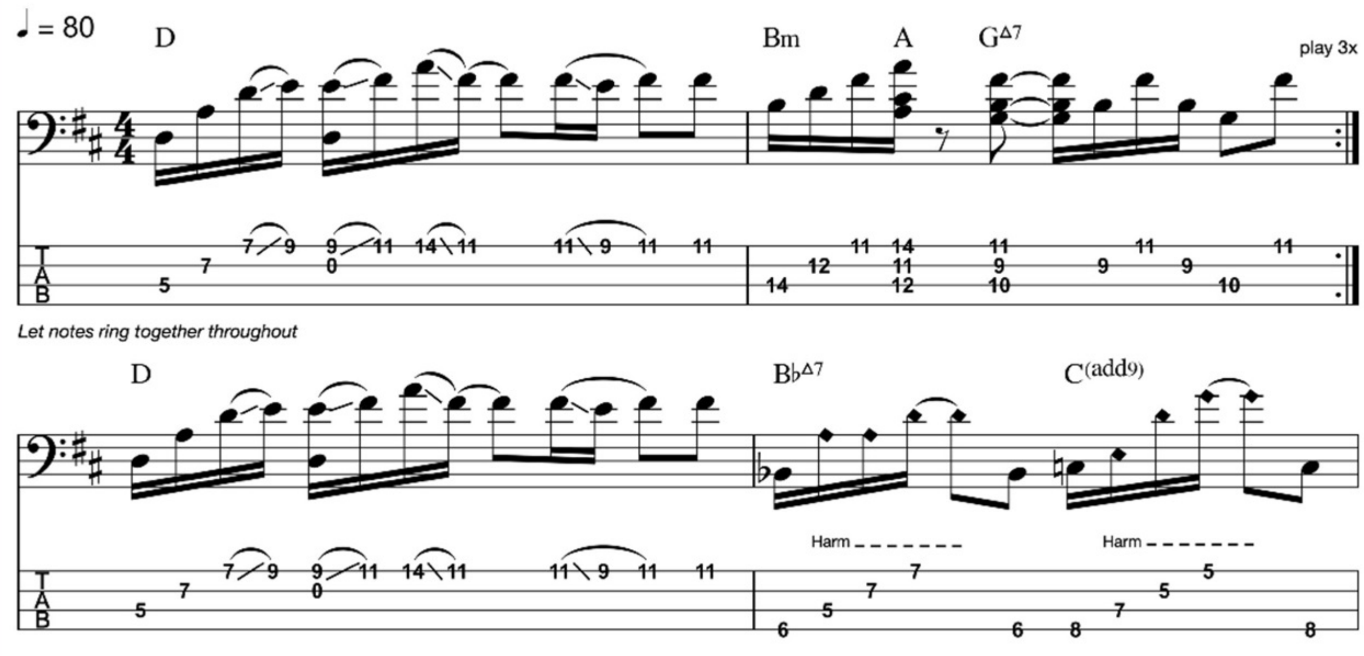
EXERCISE NINE



This chordal line features simple, moving chordal parts over a sustained bass note. In the first bar, fret the C# with the first finger and the A with the second. This shape can then slide upwards for the B/A chord, then again for the C#m/A, although some stretching will be required. The second half of the exercise features the same ideas, but in a dramatically different key centre – E minor.

EXERCISE TEN



This final exercise is a challenging line that brings together many of the elements that we've looked at in the previous nine exercises. There is also a new addition to the palette: harmonics. The picking hand technique for playing these remains the same. Try to sustain the low bass note beneath the harmonics for the full duration if possible. Remember that unlike fretted notes, you do not have to keep your finger on harmonics – they will continue to ring after you lift your finger.

I hope you've enjoyed working through these exercises, and that they provide inspiration for you to experiment with the chordal fingerstyle technique yourself. See you next month, with more concepts for you to get your teeth into.

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DANELECTRO LONGHORN

We celebrate this most divisive of bass designs...

You could reasonably state that the Danelectro Longhorn bass goes against the grain – except that its characterful tone comes from a material that, well, doesn't really have a grain.

Designed in the late Fifties by Danelectro founder Nathan Daniel, this 30.5" scale instrument is one of the original lightweight bass guitars. At less than seven pounds in weight, you'll barely know that you have a Longhorn on your shoulder, aided by the tiny headstock tuners.

This bass looks weird.
It does indeed, and if the outline of the bass itself hasn't already had you reeling, then the specification of this strange instrument will. On each side of the Coke-bottle headstock, you've got four small tuning keys that would probably be more at home on a guitar. Then there's that skinny maple neck, faced with a rosewood fretboard, and a hollow body made from Masonite.

What?
Fibre-board to you and me – steam-cooked, pressure-moulded fibre-board. I can't help but reflect on the simplicity and cleanness of the overall design. The bridge is held in place with three screws, and the single offset saddle is made from rosewood, offering more tonal variation to that of the ubiquitous 'bent bit of tin' bridges found elsewhere in that era.

Is that a two-octave neck?
Yep. Even in 1958, you could have 24 frets!

I suppose you're going to tell us the tones are good?
Actually, this bass oddity is capable of some clear and colourful tones. The sound of the Danelectro Longhorn is a little reminiscent of a Jazz bass with both pickups on, but there's some short-scale honk just under the surface of the tone range, which is generally clear. You might come a little unstuck if you try to play extended chord voicings up the neck, given the limited intonation control. The two lipstick pickups are paired with concentric controls for volume and tone, with simple pointed knobs, which might possibly be fiddly for large hands – and often the knobs would stick.

Did anyone famous play it?
John Entwistle famously used a Longhorn bass in the initial recording sessions for 'My Generation'. He ended up buying three of them, because it was easier to buy a new Longhorn than source strings that would fit! In the end, after he broke too many Danelectro strings, the Longhorn had to bow out – and the song's iconic solo was recorded with a Fender Jazz and tapewound LaBella strings instead. Even so, Entwistle was quoted as saying that the instrument had an unbelievably clear sound, and that the original solo for 'My Generation' was more complex versus the slowed-down takes of the Jazz bass. Jack Bruce was no stranger to the Longhorn bass either: in 1967, he played one at the *Strange Brew* sessions at Atlantic Recording Studios in New York City.

Dan Veall is a session and stage bass player, educator and gear expert and is here to answer your questions. Contact: @DanVeallBassist

Why should we play this thing?
Look. My first car was an Austin Mini. It had a tendency to overheat, smoke and rattle. It was small, it was difficult to get under the bonnet, and the exhaust would fall off. Still, that car made everyone smile. It seemed fast, and parts were really cheap. Driving it was a huge amount of fun.

Why are you droning on about cars?
I'm trying to draw parallels here. The Danelectro may be quirky, it's not perfectly intonated across the neck, and it's awkward to play – but just look at it. It's cute and fun, just like an Austin Mini.

How does a 6'3" bass player fit into a Mini?
Shut your piehole!

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